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MUCH INSTRUCTION

FROM

LITTLE READING,

OR,

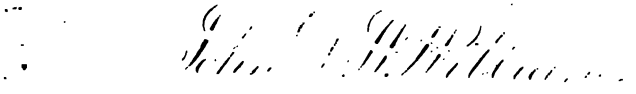
EXTRACTS

From some of the Most Approved Authors,

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

SOME BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES FROM THE EARLIEST AGES OF THE WORLD TO NEARLY THE PRESENT TIME. ALSO, SCRIPTURE LES[illegible]



BY A FRIEND TO [illegible]

VOL. II.

New-York:
PRINTED BY MAHLON DAY,
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EXTRACTS

FROM THE FIRST VOLUME

OF

HUNTER'S SACRED BIOGRAPHY.

Various methods have been employed, at different periods, and by different persons, to convey useful knowledge to mankind. The knowledge most useful and most important to man, is that of morals and religion. These sciences not only afford the most pleasant and elevating subjects of meditation, but evidently possess a very powerful influence over human happiness, both in the life which now is, and in that which is to come. *Vol.* i. p. 17.

Let it ever be remembered by all, that every man's life is of importance to himself, to his family, to his friends, to his country, and in the sight of God. They are by no means the best of men, who have made most noise in the world; neither are those actions most deserving of praise, which have obtained the greatest share of fame. Scenes of violence and blood, the workings of ambition, pride, and revenge, compose the annals of men. But piety and purity, temperance and humility, which are little noticed and soon forgotten of the world, are held in everlasting remembrance before God. And happy had it been for many of those whose names and deeds have been transmitted to us with renown, if they had never been born.

One corruption subdued is a victory infinitely more desirable, and more truly honourable, than a triumph gained amidst the confused noise of ten thousand warriors, and as many garments rolled in blood; for "he that is slow to anger is better than the

mighty; and, he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Remember, my friends, that to be a child of God is far more honourable than to be descended from kings; and that a Christian is a much higher character than a hero: and let this consideration influence all that you undertake, all that you do.

Act as if the eyes of Cato were always upon you, was the precept given, and the motive urged, to the Roman youth, in order to excel in virtue. The eyes of God are in truth continually upon you. Live then as in his sight; and knowing that every action as it is performed, every word as it is spoken, and every thought as it arises, is recorded in the book of God's remembrance, and must come into judgment: "Keep thy heart with all diligence," set a watch on the door of thy lips, "and whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God." p. 24.

Adam was put into the garden of Eden to keep it; and he for whom God and nature

had produced all things in a luxuriant abundance, had nevertheless employment assigned him; he is placed in the garden to dress it. And can any of his degenerate sons then dream of independent property, or reckon want of employment to be an honourable distinction? p. 29.

Ease that succeeds anguish is doubly relished and enjoyed. Kindness from one whom we have offended, falls with weight pleasingly oppressive upon the mind. p. 52.

The materials of which life is composed, are not so much its days, and months, and years, as works of piety, and mercy, and justice, or their opposites. He dies in full maturity, who has lived to God and eternity, at whatever period, and in whatever manner he is cut off. That life is short, though extended to a thousand years, which is disfigured with vice, devoted to the pursuits of time merely, and at the close of which the unhappy man is found unreconciled to God. p. 53.

That cattle may furnish either the fleece for clothing, or milk for food, they must be protected from inclement seasons, and ravenous beasts; they must be conducted to proper pasture, and provided with water from the brook. p. 54.

It is not the occupation which has merit or demerit; the man who exercises it, is the object of censure or of praise. It is not the husbandry of Cain, but wicked Cain the husbandman that we blame; it is not the shepherd's life, but good Abel the shepherd that we esteem. p. 55.

What is any condition, any employment, unconnected with, unsupported, unadorned by religion! How wretched a creature is the mere citizen of this world, whose views, pursuits, and enjoyments, all terminate in time! The man who sees not his comforts and his successes as coming from the hand of God; and whose heart rises not in gratitude to the giver of all good, is a stranger

to the choicest ingredient in the cup of prosperity.

Religion is pressed upon us by the very law of our nature; and it is absolutely necessary to human happiness. p. 55.

Men are often angry when they ought to be grieved; and remorse for their own unworthiness frequently becomes resentment against their innocent neighbours; and not seldom it changes into sullenness, insolence, and rebellion against God himself. p. 57.

The soul, of which envy, malice, and revenge, have taken possession, is lost to the better feelings of human nature; is deaf to remonstrance, and insensible of kindness. The innocent are simple and unsuspicious; intending no evil, they fear none. p. 57.

Death, at whatever season, in whatever form, and from whatever quarter it comes, is always unspeakably great gain to a good man. p. 58.

It is a desirable thing to enjoy a good name while we live, and to be remembered with kindness after we are dead. But reputation is the gift of others; it is often gained without merit, and lost without a crime. Whereas true goodness is a real, unalienable possession; it cleaves to us in death; it accompanies us to the world of spirits; it instructs the world while we live; it speaks from the grave; it shines in the presence of God in heaven. Here, my friends, it is lawful and honourable to aspire. Permit others to get before you in wealth or in fame; grudge not to your neighbour the superiority in wit, or strength, or beauty: but yield to none in piety, in purity, in faith, in charity; aim at the highest honours of the Christian name; be humble, and be every thing. p. 59.

A pious child dead, is beyond all controversy, a possession infinitely preferable to a profligate alive. p. 62.

Offences committed in secret, and offend-

ers, whose power and station bid defiance to earthly tribunals, fall properly under the immediate cognizance of heaven. p. 63.

How dreadful is the progress of vice! How crime leads on to crime! envy begets malice; malice inspires revenge; revenge hurries on to blood; blood-guiltiness seeks shelter under untruth; and untruth attempts to support itself by insolence, assurance, and pride: and haughtiness of spirit is but one step from destruction. Ah! little do men know when they indulge one evil thought, or venture on one unwarrantable action, what the issue is to be! They vainly flatter themselves it is in their power to stop when they please. But passion, like a fiery and unmanageable steed in the hands of an unskilful rider, by one inconsiderate stroke of the spur, may be excited to such a pitch of fury, as no skill can tame, no force restrain; but both horse and rider are hurried together down the precipice, and perish in their rage. p. 64.

The milder, and more indirect admonitions and reproofs of God's word and providence being misunderstood, slighted or defied, justice is concerned, and necessity requires, to speak in plainer language, and to bring the charge directly home: and that severity is most awful, which was preceded by gentleness, patience, and long suffering. p. 64.

When the mind is changed, every thing changes with it: when a man is at discord with himself, he is * always from home. p. 65.

The person whom all men shun is every where a stranger; he who is smitten of his own conscience, is continually surrounded with enemies. p. 65.

But God remembers mercy in the midst of anger: and the life which he himself was graciously pleased to spare, no one else

* Eternally.

must, on any pretence whatever, presume to take away. He only, who can bestow life, has a right to dispose of it. p. 65.

Whatever assists faith, whatever supports a sound morality, whatever conveys real information, inspires a taste for goodness, represses inordinate and sinful desires; whatever teaches gratitude and love to God and good will to men, that we would carefully observe, and earnestly inculcate. p. 66.

The wicked man's history is a loud admonition to all, to watch over their spirits, and carefully to guard against the first emotions of envy, anger, hatred, contempt, malice, or revenge. p. 70.

Hold thy bloody hand, son, daughter of murderous Cain! Why should a brother, a sister fall by it! That furious look is a dagger; that unkind word has made the blood, the heart's blood to follow it. Daughter of murderous Cain! A female hand

armed with a sword, lifted up to slay, dipped in blood! No, she wields a more deadly weapon, she brandishes an envenomed tongue: poison more fatal than that of asps is under her lips; it is not the body that suffers when that unruly member moves, it is the spirit that bleeds: the man dies, and sees not who it was that hurt him; he perishes in the best part of himself, his good name is blasted, and what has he left worth possessing? The sight of a little material blood makes her faint: a dead corpse terrifies and shocks her; but she can calmly, and with delight, sit down to that horrid human sacrifice, a murdered, mangled reputation. p. 71.

One great branch of holy walking with God, is useful walking among men. p. 74.

It is not the religion of God, which withdraws or excludes men from society, and teaches disrespect to the secular destinations of Providence, or the relative obligations and connexions of life.—No, it is the

religion of satan, which would represent as impure what God declares pure, and permits to all, enjoins upon all; it is "a seducing spirit and a doctrine of devils," which forbids to marry, "which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them who believe and know the truth." What! is a wretched solitary monk in his cell, holier than Enoch, the father of a numerous family, who pleased God, so as to be rewarded with exemption from death, and with immediate admission into the kingdom of Heaven? He who lives unconnected, wilfully contracts his sphere of being useful, and of doing good; he wickedly hides his talent in the ground: he robs God, his country, and his kindred, of services which they have a just right to expect from him. p. 75.

How clearly do those men discern whose eyes are opened by the spirit of the living God!

Men are apt earnestly to covet the gifts, which are dispensed but to a few, and are not always sanctified to the possessor;

while they are careless about the graces which God is ever ready to bestow upon all, and which always accompany salvation.

Let me possess, O God, an humble and a charitable spirit, though with the simplicity of a child: rather than "speak with the tongue of men or of angels," and be destitute of it. p. 77.

"Enoch walked with God."—Every thing else is transitory and fading. Youthful vigour and beauty are but the short-lived flowers of the spring, which die as soon as they are born; the honourable distinctions of this world are bubbles of empty air, which burst in a moment, and disappear forever; scientific researches and discoveries, are only the amusements of children, who know but in part, and see as "in a glass darkly:" but holy walking with God is the honourable employment of a man: it is a permanent and perennial source of satisfaction, it is the essence of life; the cure of pain; the conqueror of death; the gate of immortality; it is Heaven upon earth. And wherein

does it consist? "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?—No.—Walking with God must therefore commence in reconciliation to God: and scripture knows, acknowledges, teaches no other way of reconciliation but one. p. 78.

"By faith Enoch was translated,—before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.—But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Now, in every age of the world, faith has but one and the same object. From Abel down to the youngest of the prophets, and from the fisherman who left his nets, and his wordly all to follow Jesus, to the end of time, the being, the nature, and the will of God have been, and can be savingly known, and the mercy of God, savingly embraced only through a mediator. On this foundation, what a superstructure of holiness may be raised! what gratitude, love, submission, and obedience to God. What complacency and delight in him!

what kindness, compassion, forbearance, beneficence and charity towards men!

p. 79.

Those lives which deserve most to be had in remembrance, are most easily recorded, and consist of fewest articles. The history of an Enoch is comprised in three words, while the exploits of an Alexander, a Cæsar, or any other of the scourgers and destroyers of mankind, swell to many volumes. But what comparison is there between the bubble reputation bestowed by historians, poets, or orators, on the worthless and the wicked; and the solid, sterling praise conferred on the wise and good, by the spirit of God, by whom actions are weighed, and who will at last "bring every secret thing into judgment?" And woe be unto them who love the praise of men more than the praise of God. p. 82.

Imprudent intermarriages between the posterity of pious Seth, called "the sons of God," and the female descendants of wicked Cain, denominated "the daughters of

men," attracted by external transitory charms, form alliances inconsistent with wisdom, and disallowed of heaven. What ensued? That which will always happen to piety unwisely and unequally yoking itself with irreligion and profanity; the evil principle being much more powerful to pervert the good, than the good to reform the evil. Giants are said to have been the issue of those marriages, literally perhaps men of huge stature, certainly men of lofty, aspiring, haughty minds, the heirs to the pride, vanity, and presumption of their mothers, more than to the decency, wisdom, and piety of their male ancestors. p. 85.

Goodness supported and kept in countenance by the mode, and by multitudes, is amiable and praise-worthy; but goodness single and alone, goodness stemming the torrent, resisting the contagion of example, despising the universal sneer, braving universal opposition, such goodness is superior to all praise.

What so brutish and incorrigible, as men given up to their own lusts.

We cannot conclude the present without reflecting on the danger and mischief which arise from forming graceless connexions. It administers a solemn and suitable admonition to the male part of my audience, who have not already contracted alliances for life, to consider a principle of religion, and a taste for devotion, as among the leading qualities to be sought after in the female character, and the only sure foundation of honourable and lasting friendship; as the basis of, and prompter to every domestic duty. It administers a just, and, I am sorry to add, a seasonable reproof, to that spirit of avarice and selfishness, together with that criminal love of pleasure, which too much characterize the young men of the present day, and to which the higher consideration of piety, modesty, and accomplishments really useful and ornamental, are daily sacrificed.

It instructs my female hearers, too, in the knowledge of what constitutes their real worth and excellence. "Favour is deceit-

ful and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

p. 92.

I would make a kinder use of these sad events, by considering them as instances of the great power which women have over men; and hence earnestly call upon Christian women, to cultivate with care and diligence the graces of that character, and to employ their influence, according to their different relations and opportunities, to diffuse a taste for what is decent, pious, and praise-worthy; and they may rest assured, that their friends of the other sex will at least study to appear, what they would have them to be. p. 93.

It is delightful to consider, that the very judgments of Heaven, however dreadful in their nature and effects, are upon the whole, and in the end, unspeakable blessings. The wrath of man and judgments of which men are the authors, like the uncontrolled rage of devouring flames, spare nothing; they consume root and branch together. But

divine justice, like the refiner's fire, lays hold only of the dross, and bestows on the remaining ore greater purity and value.

p. 95.

He who makes sphere to balance sphere, in the great system of nature, can make one element check and control the rage of another, in the subordinate economy of our little globe.

Wind stops the progress, and diminishes the fury of water at God's command. The dominion of any one element prevailing too long, must soon prove fatal to the whole; but their powers blending with, opposing, balancing each other, produce that wonderful and delightful harmony, on which the being and the happiness of mankind depend. p.96.

When works of piety, charity, or mercy, are to be performed, a gracious spirit considers the urgency of the call, rather than the largeness of the means. What is saved from God and the wretched, from religion and humanity, will never make any one

rich. What is bestowed on works of piety and mercy, is property laid out at more than common interest. Did Noah's six couple of beasts, and of birds, increase more slowly, the seventh being devoted in sacrifice to his Maker and preserver? I suppose not. In this, if in any sense, what the wise man says, is true, "There is that scattereth and yet aboundeth: there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty." p. 99.

The juice of the grape when eaten from the tree, or dryed in the sun, is simple and nutricious, like the grain from the stalk of corn; pressed out and fermented, it acquires a fiery force, it warms the blood, it mounts to the brain, it leads reason captive, it overpowers every faculty, it triumphs over its lord. How often have arts been invented, which have proved fatal to the inventors? Alas! must it not also be observed, that our very food and cordials contain a poison, through the ignorance or excess of man. p. 101.

Whether life be long or short, "death certainly is the end of all men, and the living should lay it to his heart." p. 102.

It is never either too early or too late to serve and follow God. But the folly and presumption of youth is but too apt to defer matters of the greatest moment to the last hour; and this fatal waste of the seed-time of life, is the sure foundation of dishonour, remorse, and despair in old age. p. 120.

There is something singularly affecting in the idea of an old man giving up the scenes of his youthful days; scenes endeared to the mind by the fond recollection of past joys; foregoing his kindred and friends; and becoming an exile and a wanderer, at a period when nature seeks repose, and when the heart cleaves to those objects to which it has been long accustomed. But that man goes on cheerfully, who knows he is following God; he can never remove far from home, who has "made the Most High his habitation;" he who falls

asleep in the bosom of a father, knows that he shall awake in perfect peace and safety. Accordingly, "Abram, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went." What could have induced him to make such a surrender but a sense of his duty to God, an entire acquiescence in the wisdom and goodness of Providence, and a full assurance that his heavenly Father both could and would indemnify him for every sacrifice which he was called to make! A sacrifice similar to this every real Christian virtually offers up, when he renounces the pomp and pleasure of this vain world, to the hope of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." p. 121.

When men are to receive immediately their indemnification or equivalent, the merit of a surrender is small, but it requires the faith and trust of an Abram, to take a general promise of God as full security. p. 122.

True faith makes light of none of God's benefits: and worldly prosperity honourably acquired, moderately and thankfully enjoyed, is an undoubted mark of God's favour. p. 123.

He who has set up his rest in the Almighty, is every where and always at home; and a truly gracious spirit will never omit a work of piety and mercy under a pretence of wanting means or opportunity. p. 123.

Has not the great, the Almighty God, resistless power over our bodies and our minds? and cannot he make every element, every creature a vehicle of his will to us. p. 123.

Abram's altar is not built in the spirit wherein many a sacred edifice has been since reared, and many a pious volume purchased for shew, not for use.

Self-preservation is the first law of nature; "and he that provideth not for his own, especially those of his own house

hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

Let nature or providence raise what obstacles they may, faith removes or surmounts them. Abram sets not down suddenly with the peevish prophet, saying, "I do well to be angry,"—but employs sagacity and diligence to discover and to obtain the means of relief. p. 124.

The conscious shame of having acted wrong, and of thereby having brought mischief upon another, is, perhaps, the severest punishment an ingenuous mind can suffer.

One failing breaks not off the intercourse between God and a good man. p. 125.

Every earthly good thing brings its inconvenience along with it. Behold the increase of riches becomes an increase of vexation. Though the masters are disposed to peace, the servants cannot agree.

For once that riches promote friendship, they ten times engender strife by setting on

fire, envy, or jealousy, or pride, or some such destructive passion.

"If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or, if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." An hundred sermons preached, or an hundred volumes written in favour of a peaceable, gentle, yielding, generous, manly spirit, were far short of the plain and persuasive lesson taught us by this conduct of the patriarch, a useful and striking example to believers. p. 126.

Christians you call yourselves, sons of faithful Abram: let me see that you are actuated by his spirit. What sacrifice, I beseech you, are you making, what sacrifice have you made, to conscience, to duty, to your Christian profession? What worldly interest have you given up? What lust have you mortified? What exercise of humility, of self-denial, of self-government, are you engaged in? Faith in God, and submission to his will, were the leading principles of Abram's life: what are yours?

Deal faithfully with God, and with yourselves; and know, that to be a lover of the pleasures, riches, or honours of a present world to the neglect of religion, and its joys, is to prefer Ur of the Chaldees, with its impurity, impiety, and idolatry, to the love and worship of the living and true God.

Was the faith of Abram always uniform, his obedience perfect, his conduct irreproachable? No: then it is not always to be imitated, nor at all to be depended upon. But there is a pattern of faith and obedience, which all may propose as an example, and upon which all may rest as a ground of acceptance with God.

When such an one as Abram falters in his duty, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall:" let none "be high-minded, but fear:" let us account no danger small, no foe contemptible, no deviation from the path of rectitude a light thing. Let us watch most diligently on our weakest side: and let us learn from the patience, forbearance, and tender mercy of God, when "a brother is overtaken in a fault," to "re-

store such an one in the spirit of meekness."

Had Abram an altar for God before he had an habitation for himself? Learn from him, O young men, how to begin the world, as you wish to thrive and prosper in it. The house in which no altar is erected to God, wants both a foundation and a covering.

The family which wants the word and the worship of God, is not yet begun to be furnished. Make room for your Maker, and he will settle you in a large place. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things shall be added to you."

Did Abram rule his own spirit, did he meekly recede from his just right, did he gently yield to an inferior for the sake of peace? Blush, O man, to think of thy pride and selfishness; of thy positiveness in opinion, thy devotedness to interest, thy insolence in the day of power, thy contempt of the opinions, thy indifference to the feelings and the happiness of others.

Look to Abram and learn to be a conqueror. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Look to your

Father in heaven, who "is kind to the evil and unthankful:" "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." And thus, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." p. 128.

To perform splendid actions, and to exhibit heroic virtue, is given but to a few; and opportunities of this kind but seldom occur in the course of one life. Whereas, occasions to practice generosity, justice, mercy, and moderation; to speak truth, and shew kindness; to melt with pity, and glow with affection; to forbear and to forgive, are administered to us every step we move through the world, and recur more frequently upon us, than even the means of gratifying the common appetites of hunger and thirst.

When, therefore, we behold men of like passions with ourselves, placed in situations exactly similar to our own, practising virtues within our reach, and discovering a temper and disposition, which, if we please

to cultivate, we may easily attain; then, if we read not with profit as well as with delight, it must be because we want not the power, but the inclination to improve.

Abram left his kindred and father's house at God's command. Multitudes do the same thing every day, impelled by ambition, by avarice, by curiosity, by a wandering, restless disposition. Happy is he, who, in removing, does not leave his religion behind him; and, who, in the midst of the employments, or the delights of a new situation or place of residence, is not tempted to forget or to forsake the God of his native home, and of his early years. Alas! how often does this very metropolis prove the grave of virtuous sentiments, or religious principles, and a regular education. p. 130.

Dishonest gain can never bestow contentment, and seldom descends to a remote heir. Behold in Abram a soul superior to the love of riches, and consequently greater than a king. There is something delightfully soothing to the human heart in the idea

of property:—one's own home, his own field, his own flock. If any thing can add to the satisfaction of this kind of possession, it is the having acquired it honourably and the capacity of enjoying it with cheerfulness, wisdom, and moderation. p. 134.

Never do we find wealth flowing in, and increasing upon a man, without some corresponding peril or inconvenience. Either the mind is corrupted by it; or the possessor is exposed to be hated, envied, and plundered.

How can any one think of security and peace in this world, when the rashness, malice, folly, or pride of a domestic may set a man at variance with his chief friends? Indeed, we are vulnerable in exact proportion to the extent of our possessions. p. 131.

Abram, no doubt, both might and could have asserted the preference; and he proves that he well deserved it by giving it up. What person in this assembly but stands reproved or admonished by the ex-

ample of the patriarch's humility, moderation, and affability? It is indeed a perfect contrast to that tenaciousness of their opinions, that the punctilious adherence to the least iota of their rights, that inflexibility of self-love and self-conceit, that perpetual assumption or demand of preference and superiority, which mark the conduct of most men.—Were it necessary to enforce the example of Abram by the precepts of the gospel; the whole spirit of Christianity, a multitude of particular injunctions, and above all, the temper and conduct of the Great Pattern of all that is amiable and excellent, might be adduced to expose and condemn, if not to cure that selfish spirit, equally inconsistent with good sense and religion, which exacts a perpetual sacrifice from others, without discerning the propriety or necessity of making the slightest sacrifice to others in return.

Remember, Christians, it is the same man, who, for the sake of peace with a brother, gave up his just claim to a junior and inferior; that was not afraid in the

cause of the injured and oppressed to attack a numerous host, headed by princes, flushed with victory. With whom then does true magnanimity reside? surely with the humble and condescending. The man who has subdued his own spirit is invincible. Behold in this the nature and the foundation of true courage. It is not to make light of life; it is not "to rush like the horse into battle;" it is not to talk high-swelling words of vanity: it is to fear God; it is to be calm and composed in danger; it is to possess hope beyond the grave; it is to be superior to the pride, and incapable of the insulting triumph of success. Behold how the kindred graces and virtues delight to reside in unity and harmony, in the bosom of a good man!

Neither good nor bad qualities are to be found solitary in the breast of any one. Is a man pious? then he is humble. Is he humble? then, meek and condescending. Is he condescending? then bold, then just, then generous, then merciful. Is he a

child of God, a disciple of Jesus? then he is all that is amiable. p. 136.

The eagerness and avidity with which men pry into abstruse and difficult subjects, can be exceeded only by their coldness and indifference to obvious and important truth. The religious controversies which have engaged so much attention, occupied so much time, and furnished employment for so many rare talents; which have whetted the tempers, and too often the swords of men against each other, are, in general, on points of doctrine, too deep and mysterious ever to be fathomed by human understanding, too lofty to be scanned without boldness and presumption, or too trifling to merit regard.

Revealed religion, like every thing that is of God, must necessarily present many difficulties to a creature so limited as man. But instead of being rejected on that account, it is the more to be prized and reverenced; as having this evidence, among many others, of coming from Him, whose

nature, whose works, and whose ways, none "can find out unto perfection."

Curiosity, guided by humility, and aiming at useful discovery, is a laudable and useful principle. But curiosity impelled by self-conceit, and resting in mere speculation, is generally rash and presumptuous, often trifling, impertinent, and contemptible. In every branch of knowledge, those truths are the most valuable which are the plainest, and which present themselves in the greatest abundance: just as nature produces in the greatest profusion those commodities which are most useful and necessary to man. p. 142.

It is pleasing to find ourselves mistaken in our calculations of the numbers of good men, and in our estimates of the state of religion in the world. For these calculations and estimates through ignorance and contractedness of spirit, are generally, if not always erroneous by being short of the truth, and what heart but must exult in the prospect of the grace of God, being more

widely diffused than we apprehended, and extended to regions unknown, and multitudes unthought of by us. p. 144.

The great God is infinitely above the need of our services. How then can we honour him most, and serve him best? by copying his examples, by doing good, by communicating to the comfort of others what he has kindly bestowed upon us. What object does this world present, once to be compared with a human being replete with benevolence, habitually studying to glorify his Creator, by alleviating the distresses, and promoting the happiness of his creatures? this is the true lustre of riches, this is the glory of greatness, this is the splendour of power, this the majesty of kings.

Kindren spirits are easily and powerfully attracted to each other, and religion forms the strongest and tenderest bond of union among men. The patriarch nobly disdains to accept the spoils proffered to him by the king of Sodom; but joyfully and with grati-

tude, embraces the friendship and kindness of the king of Salem. The gifts of a bad man yield a very mixed satisfaction to an honest mind, but it is pleasing to the soul to receive benefits from the wise and good. An interchange of kind offices is the life of friendship in worthy minds. In our commerce with heaven, benefits flow continually from God to us; continually receiving, we have nothing to send back but the effusions of a thankful heart, and the humble desires of needy dependants, but friendship among men subsists only among equals, and depends on kindnesses mutually given and received. p. 145.

The blessing that cometh down from heaven, ascends, together with its fruit, to heaven again; as the precious drops which fall down to water the earth, rise upward in gales of fragrance, from the fruits and flowers which they produce, and perfume the air. What other of the kings of the earth is to be compared with Melchizedec? Is he not rather raised up of Providence to

reproach, and condemn the potentates of this world; the rule of whose government, too often, is not righteousness and law, but honour and caprice; and the end of it, not to bless mankind, but to gratify some passion of their own, who instead of preserving the nations in peace, themselves the sons of peace, have incessantly from the beginning to this unhappy day, involved the wretched human race in scenes of war, and violence, and blood! Alas! kings are "set in slippery places." Their education, their station, their employments, their connexions, all, all unhappily, encroach upon the offices of religion; tend to weaken its impressions, and to shut out its consolations. But peace and righteousness are not mere external designations of Messiah our prince; names without a meaning, titles without merit, like many of those which are worn by the potentates of this world, *Catholic*, *Most Christian*, *Faithful*, *Imperial*, *Defender of the Faith!* appellations calculated to excite pity or derision. No, his titles are of the essence of his nature; the display of them,

is the object of his mission, and the consummation of his plan. "His name shall be called the Prince of Peace." "Of the increase of his government, and peace, there shall be no end." p. 150.

Turn all your inquiries to some good account; remembering that "the end of the commandment is charity," is to inspire veneration and love to God, and good will to men. Seek not to be "wise above what is written:" and be not wise in your own conceit." In reverence adore an incomprehensible Jehovah, who by no search is to be "found out unto perfection." p. 155.

Rejoice in hope of that day when all mysteries shall be unveiled, and the wisdom, the love, and the goodness of God shall shine conspicuously in every creature and every event; when such as is the head shall all the members be, and let us, "by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality. p. 156.

Religion, in every age and nation, has been the foundation of good faith, and of mutual confidence among men. p. 157.

Why should we curiously inquire after the nature of the heavenly vision, and ask in what manner the word of the Lord came unto Abram? Know we not the secret, the inexplicable, the irresistible power which God possesses and exercises over the bodies and over the minds of men? Know we not what it is to blush for our follies, though no eye beholds us, to tremble under the threatenings of a guilty conscience, though no avenger be pursuing; and to enjoy serenity and peace, in the midst of confusion and tempest? whence is this, but from the word of the Lord within us constraining or encouraging us to hear? p. 164.

Alas! what condition of humanity is exempted, for any length of time together, from sorrow and vexation of spirit? p. 165.

Abram has done what was incumbent upon him; but the great God is not limited to seasons or forms; Abram must therefore wait and watch—wait till God condescends to appear—watch, that his sacrifice be not plundered or polluted. At length, about the going down of the sun, the approach of Deity is felt. "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram: and lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him." How insupportable must be the visitations of God's anger! (I tremble while I speak) if the visions of his mercy and love are so awful and tremendous! p. 167.

Let us in conclusion, raise our thoughts to a new covenant, established on better promises; let us look to that body which was broken upon the cross, the atonement for transgression; to that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away; to that "kingdom which cannot be moved," that government and peace, of "which there shall be no end; to that day when "they that be wise shall shine as the

brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

Is every discovery of God a mixture of light and darkness, "a furnace that smoketh, a lamp that burneth," "a pillar of cloud, a pillar of fire?" Let us rejoice and walk, and live in that light; let us revere, adore, and preserve an humble distance from that darkness. Are the visits of God's wrath intolerable to the wicked; and the approaches of his gracious presence awful even to the good? Let us then, think of drawing nigh to him, only through the Son of His love, in whom he is ever well pleased. Is the covenant on God's part "ordered in all things and sure?" Are all "the promises," in Christ "yea and amen?" is the "glory" they propose and ensure "yet to be revealed?" "Be not faithless, but believing;" "cast all your care upon him for he careth for you." Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known.

p. 168.

He who cometh will come and will not tarry. p. 169.

The ways of Providence and the workings of the human mind do not always keep pace one with another in the pursuit of their ends, men are at one time careless and indolent, at another over eager and hasty: but God is ever advancing towards his, with a steady, progressive, majestic pace. When we get sight of a favourite object, we grasp at it through possibility and impossibility; we hurry on to possession, too little scrupulous about the means.

To God all things are possible; and "he is the rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity; just and right is he." Men ignorantly and weakly judge of their Maker by themselves, and foolishly attempt to regulate the divine procedure by their own preconceived opinions of it. "Behold I thought," said Naaman the Syrian, "he will surely come out to me and stand, and call upon the name of the Lord his God,

and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper;" but God had said, "go and wash in Jordan seven times and thou shalt be clean. It is rare to find a faith which steadily, cheerfully, and constantly walks hand in hand with the purpose and promise of heaven. We either stagger at the promise, through unbelief, or impatiently strive to bring forward the accomplishment by indirect methods.

When we look into history, how unlike do events appear from the form into which they were previously shaped by the fond expectations of the persons concerned! The Jews in the person of Messiah, looked for a prince who should revive the faded splendour of David's throne; but the Messiah whom God raised up, established a kingdom "of righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The disciples are dreaming of sitting at their Master's right and left hand, when the kingdom should be restored to Israel;" he is sending them forth to "suffer shame for his name."

"He that believeth shall not make haste."

Faith neither lags behind, nor strives to outrun the word of God. But in the most composed, firmest, and faithfulest of believers, we find the frailties and infirmities of the man frequently predominant; and a slighter temptation sometimes prevailing, after more severe and difficult trials have been withstood and overcome. p.171.

Projects formed and executed in haste, are generally repented of at leisure. The truth is, it is very natural, and very common, to try to get rid of a present pressure, though with the hazard of subjecting ourselves to a heavier burden.

Not blindly and capriciously, but in wisdom and in righteousness, the great God apportions to the sons of men good and evil in this life; that none may be exalted above measure, and that none may sink into dejection and despair. p. 172.

See unto what disorder one ill-advised measure has thrown a happy, well regulated family. In what deep and accumu-

lated woe, I say, may one inconsiderate step involve the children of men! And if good and well intentioned people suffer thus severely from one act of rashness and imprudence, who but must tremble to think of the fearful consequence of deliberate wickedness? p. 175.

How different are the appearances of Providence, considered at the moment, and viewed through the medium of reflection and experience! Under the impulse of sorrow or of joy, we cry out, "all these things are against me," or "it is good for me to be here;" but when the account comes to be arranged, after the transport is over, we find ourselves necessitated to transfer many articles to the opposite pages, and to state that as favourable, which once we called adverse, and that a misfortune, which once we accounted a blessing.

p. 177.

We are not to judge of the greatness and importance of the designs of Providence, by any worldly marks of distinction and

pre-eminence. The things which are highly esteemed among men, are often of no price in the sight of Him, who "hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, weak things to confound the mighty, base things of the world, and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are. that no flesh should glory in his presence." p. 179.

I like not hasty references to Heaven. A truly serious spirit will reflect twice before it interposes the name of God on any occasion, or shudder at the thought of employing it upon a false or frivilous one; an angry spirit sticks at nothing.

For this reason I will sooner believe a plain unprofessing man, on his simple word, than ten thousand common swearers, under the sanction of as many oaths. p. 174.

When men are disappointed in their expectations, it is natural for them to become negligent about the performance of their

duties. Irritated or grieved at one thing they grow careless in every thing; and because another has failed in affection or respect to us, we suffer ourselves to behave unkindly or disrespectfully to others. The effect which mortification, disappointment, or injuries, have upon truly good minds, is, however, the reverse of this; the vexation or distress they themselves have endured, is the strongest of incentives to prove as far as they are able, similar occasion of affliction to their brethren of mankind.

Men stand continually in need of each other, and therefore every man is bound to give his countenance to shew kindness and grant support to every man.

We cannot move a single step through the world, without being brought into connexion with strangers, and of course, without having opportunities afforded us of doing or receiving some instance of hospitality. To be careless or unkind in this respect, then, is to be at once unwise, inhuman, and unjust. As we are continually reminded, in the course of Providence, of

our being pilgrims and strangers upon earth, so we are strictly and repeatedly enjoined by the laws of the gospel, to be attentive and kind to strangers. "Be given to hospitality," says Paul. "Use hospitality one towards another without grudging," says Peter; and in the words I have read, the Apostle recommends the same duty of humanity, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers," which he enforces by a motive which every heart must feel, "for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

p. 182.

Our attendance upon God must be constant and assiduous; and it is equally our interest and our duty to wait upon him; but if he makes himself known to us at all, at whatever season, in whatever manner, it is infinite grace and condescension. The presence of the Almighty is the loudest call to humility, and the more any one knows of God the more he must fear before him.

p. 183.

Abraham immediately starts from his seat with all the agility of youth, at the sight of

the strangers, and with all that glow of affection which is natural to a good man, who had himself known the heart of a stranger, he tenders them every accommodation and refreshment which his simple habitation could afford. Sweetness of temper, easiness of behaviour, and kindness of disposition, are peculiarly engaging in old people, because these qualities do not so frequently adorn life's decline. The invitation hospitably given is cheerfully accepted. True kindness which is true politeness, attends to the little wishes and wants of those we entertain.

Water to wash the feet of the weary traveller is a refreshment, though not so necessary as a morsel of bread to comfort his heart, yet, in a sultry climate especially, not less grateful.

We remember slight attentions after we have forgotten great benefits. The proud man makes a feast to gratify himself; the hospitable man, to rivet the bonds of friendship, or cherish the soul of the stranger. What a delightful simplicity runs through

the whole story! The fare, "cakes of fine meal, baked upon the hearth," by the hands of Sarah herself; a "calf from the herd," of Abraham's own choosing, butter and milk, the produce of their own pasture; their canopy, the spreading branches of an old tree; their attendants, the man who had in former days put kings and their armies to flight; the subject of their conversation, Abraham's family affairs.

Contrast with this the madness of a modern fashionable entertainment; the profusion of far-fetched luxury, the emulation of wealth and pride, the ingenuity employed in contriving and administering incentives to excess, the gibberish of compliment, the restraints of ceremony, the tinsel of false wit, the noise of mirth without joy, to the expulsion of truth and nature; a costly and painful collection, where nothing is wanting, but the very things which constitute a feast, plenty of wholesome fare, unaffected friendship, moderation, good humour, and good sense. p. 187.

When we are doing our duty, we are in the way of procuring for ourselves gratification; and if there be a virtue which is its own reward, hospitality is that virtue.

Ah! how dangerous it is to have deviated once from the path of rectitude! how one false step leads to another, and another, till conviction and shame close the scene.

People who listen, generally hope or fear to hear something about themselves; and it seldom happens that they are entirely gratified with what they hear. p. 188.

The judgments of God are very awful to a serious mind; fools only make a mock at sin, and its fearful consequences. p. 190.

Of all the temporal blessings which God in his exuberant goodness hath bestowed upon mankind, one of the greatest, if not the chief, is a sincere and virtuous friend. Into the composition of this character, enter all the amiable and excellent qualities which our nature possesses; and in a commerce of virtuous friendship, we find the exertion

of the noblest principles, and a display of the worthiest actions. The person who is approved and esteemed of wise and good men, must himself be wise and good. p. 192.

When we view an object but in one light, that which strikes us first, and flatters us most, and when we make choice of it for a few more obvious and attractive qualities, we are laying up for ourselves sorrow and remorse in the day when experience has opened our eyes to the discovery of circumstances, unheeded or overlooked before. p. 194.

O how lovely, how majestic is simple truth! it seeks no retirement, stands in need of no defence, is ever consistent with itself, ever inspires with courage him who practises it. Falsehood strips the mind of its conscious dignity, keeps a man perpetually in fear, puts invention continually on the rack to prevent the means of detection. p. 196.

No created joy is either pure and unmixed, or of long continuance.

Thus, in every state and condition of human life, God sets one thing against another, that we may still and ever be brought to the recollection, that "this is not our rest." p. 198.

So happily is our nature framed, that use at length reconciles the mind to what was in prospect insupportable, and at first galling and distressful.

The parts of history which please and instruct us most, are those which exhibit to us illustrious persons in trying situations, holding fast their integrity, conducting themselves with wisdom, and overcoming great difficulty by patience, and fortitude, and trust in God.

The passages of our own lives which we recollect with the greatest satisfaction, and which we find ourselves most disposed to relate to others, are those which, while they passed, were involved in the greatest danger and distress. The memory of past

joys is generally insipid and disgusting, but the recollection of the perils which we have escaped, the obstacles which we have surmounted, the miseries which we have endured and overcome, is in truth the chief ingredient in the happiness of our more tranquil days, and the consolation which a life of fatigue, exertion, and calamity, provides for the inactivity, feebleness, and retirement of old age. p. 203.

Who among you is sacrificing, I do not say, his lawful joys, but his sinful lusts? Who among you is rising up early, and, with a resolute hand, slaying his sloth, his pride, his avarice, his lust, his malignity, before the altar of God? Who among you is rising betimes to "offer unto God thanksgiving;" to contemplate the glories of nature; to adore and admire the wonders of Providence; to look into the mystery of redemption, and to meditate with new and increasing delight on that love of Christ which passeth knowledge?" p. 212.

What is the amount of human life? Vanity and vexation of spirit, all our wanderings tend towards the grave. The anxieties and solicitude, the hopes and fears, the disappointments and successes which alternately occupy and agitate the mind, at length come to one issue, and all-conquering death settles the account. p. 214.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE SECOND VOLUME

OF

HUNTER'S SACRED BIOGRAPHY.

LET him who is rearing a mansion of 1000 feet by 500, meditate on one of 6 by 2, and learn to die. *Vol.* ii. p. 19.

Eternal Spirit of Wisdom! vouchsafe thou to be our instructor and our guide: point out to us the objects which deserve our notice: enlighten thou our eyes, guard our hearts, direct the paths of our feet. What we know not, that do thou teach us; what we do know, help us wisely to improve.

p. 23.

Have you ground of pride and joy, my friends, in the acknowledgment or recollec-

tion of your forefathers? Were they wise and good; blessed in themselves, and a blessing to the world? Take care that ye degenerate not from their virtues, that ye dishonour not their name, that ye swerve not "from the good old way" of piety, in which they trode. Is there in the line of your ancestry, any circumstance humiliating and painful? Efface it, annihilate it, sink it, in a new existence, derived from a celestial stock. Change the tainted, corrupted current of an earthly pedigree, for the adopted honours, the gratuitous inheritance, the ennobled spirit of your heavenly Father's love. Strive to be the first of your race; and leave to your heirs a possession infinitely better than the demesnes of princes, even the savour of a good name; a pattern worthy of imitation, the remembrance of qualities which are not subject to the stroke of death.

You see, Christians, what is the leading, the commanding object, in the eye of eternal Providence, the salvation of a lost world by Jesus Christ. Adopt the same object,

cleave unto it, keep it continually in view. All things else are vain and worthless; for they are passing quickly away. Our interest in, our hold of the world is diminishing every hour. Our consequence, as candidates for immortal bliss, as the heirs of glory, is rising in proportion. When we cease from importance, as the citizens of this world, our real importance begins to be felt and understood. I recommend not sullen distance from your fellow creatures, nor peevish discontent. Live in the world, associate with mankind, enjoy your portion which God alloteth you. But "use the world so as not to abuse it," and while your are cumbered about many things, never forget that one thing is needful; and make choice of that "good part which shall not be taken away from you."

While we speak and hear, we change; and the hand of the executing angel hastens to number us with the dead. We are going to join the venerable men whose memory we revere, whose faith we profess to follow, whose virtues we are bound to copy

Yet a little while, and time shall be no more; and we shall be contemporary with our fathers who have preceded, and with our children who are to follow us, until the dissolution of this system. p. 24.

Those scenes in human life which make the greatest figure in history, are far from being the most beneficial to mankind; neither were the persons whose names have been transmitted to us with the most renown, and whose actions have dazzled posterity with their lustre, either the happiest in themselves, or the greatest blessings to the age in which they lived. To make one man a hero, how many garments must have been died in blood? and what are the acclamations of a triumph, but the miserable echo of the cries of the wounded, and the groans of the dying?

We are this night to trace the history of a man of peace, the history of one, who was not indeed exempted from his share of the ills which flesh is heir to, but whose afflictions being private and domestic, were

patiently borne by himself, and disturbed not the repose of others; the history of one, who, by the example of his piety and virtues, did more to instruct and to bless mankind, than all the conquerors which ever existed, from Nimrod of Assyria, down to Frederick of Prussia. p. 26.

Indeed, a man's liableness to distress and disappointment is in exact proportion to the number and quality of the good things he possesses. Do we enjoy peculiar delights? we are on the brink of danger. p. 28.

Swallowed up of sorrow for the loss of his mother, or absorbed in devout meditation, Isaac leaves all concern about his future establishment in the world, to the care and wisdom of his father. And he thereby reproves the forwardness and self-sufficiency of our young men, who presume to think for themselves in every thing before they have learned to think at all; who attempt the works of men with the knowledge and the strength of children. p. 28.

Believe me, an insolent, unfeeling, uncomplying young woman, is an odious, contemptible, unnatural, a monstrous thing. p. 30.

Before spiritual regeneration all is peace in the soul, but no sooner is the new man formed in us, but the flesh conflicts with the spirit.

There is no grace where there is no unquietness. p. 32.

Riches, the object of universal desire and pursuit, create more and greater wants than those which they are able to remove. By exciting envy, jealousy, and suspicion, they separate those whom nature has joined; friendship is sacrificed to convenience; and to enjoy in security what Providence has given him, the unhappy possessor is constrained to become an alien to his own brother. p. 38.

The blessing of Providence is to be asked, and expected, only when men are found in the way of their duty, and wisely em-

ploying lawful and appointed means of prospering.

Most of the evils of a man's lot may be easily traced up to some weakness in which he has indulged himself, some error into which he has fallen, some opportunity he has let slip, or some crime which he has committed. Of all the infirmities to which our nature is subject, none is more common, none is more unreasonable, unwise, and unjust, none more easily guarded against, none more fatal in its consequences to ourselves and others, than that of making a difference between one child and another. It destroys the favourite, and discourages those who are slighted; it sows the seeds of jealousy and malice, which frequently produce strife, and end in violence and blood. It sets the father against the mother, and the mother against the father; the sister against the brother, and the brother against the sister. Parents ought to examine and to watch over themselves carefully on this head. If they are unable to suppress the feeling, the expression of it

at least, is in their power; and policy, if not justice, demands of them an equitable distribution of their affection, their countenance, and their goods. For if there be a folly which, more certainly than another, punishes itself, it is this ill-judged and wicked distinction between equals. p. 40.

By what grovelling and unworthy motives are wise and good men often actuated! And what a mortifying view of human nature is it to see the laws of prudence, and justice, and piety, vilely controlled and counteracted by the lowest and grossest of our appetites! p. 41.

Slight temptations frequently prevail, after trials more formidable have been successfully resisted and overcome. The wise, therefore, will reckon no danger small, no foe contemptible, no condition perfectly secure. The faithful will learn to speak truth, to do good, to trust in the Lord, and fear nothing.

Virtue is not hereditary in families, it

descends but in rarer instances; whereas frailty, alas! descends from every father to every son. Virtue is the water in the particular pool; vice the torrent in the river, which sweeps every thing before it. p. 44.

We are by no means to imagine, that worldly success is ever proportioned to promising means and favourable opportunities. "The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." Some men's sails seem to gather every breath of the wind: they get forward in spite of every obstacle. Others feel the tempest continually blowing in their faces. All things are against them, and though they set out with the fairest and most flattering prospects, unaccountably thwarted and disappointed, they "wax poor, and fall into decay." Let not prosperity, then, be deemed an infallible proof of wisdom, or worth, or of divine favour. Neither let want of success be always derived from folly, or vice, or the curse of heaven; for, in this mixed, imperfect, probationary state, "time and chance

happen to all men," neither can a man tell "what is good for him all the days of his vain life, which he spendeth as a shadow." p. 45.

Every temporal advantage has a corresponding infelicity.

Yielding is a victory the most certain, the most honourable, and the most satisfactory. p. 46.

The worst of men find it to be their interest to live on good terms with the wise and pious: and good men cleave to each other from affection.

All men wish to live to old age; but when they have attained their wish, they are apt to repine at the infirmities and the discomforts which are necessarily incident to it. They would be old; but they would not be blind, and palsied, and feeble. They would be old; but they would not be neglected, wearied of, and forsaken. They would be old; but they would not be practised upon and deceived. But old age certainly brings on all these, and many more inconvenien-

ces; and, vain it is to dream of the benefit, without the care. We read of but one, that is Moses himself, whose "eye, at the age of one hundred and twenty, was not dim, nor his natural force abated." p. 49.

Men are often deemed unfortunate, both by themselves and others, where they deserve to be reckoned unwise. They themselves do the mischief, and then wonder how it came about. They spoil their children, and then complain that they are so perverse. I know how difficult it is to bring up youth; how difficult to bear an even hand between child and child, to counteract the bias of favour and affection, to conceal and disguise the strong emotions of the heart. But it is only the more necessary to be prudent, to be vigilant, "to walk circumspectly," and, to ask "wisdom of God." p. 50.

Happy it is for the children of men, if their deviations from the path of rectitude meet their correction in a temporal punishment. But woe to that man, whom justice

permits to thrive in his iniquity, and to grow hardened through impunity; whose retribution is deferred till repentance can produce no change. Chastise me, O Father, as severely as thou wilt. Let me not fall asleep under my transgression; and thy hot displeasure. Dispose as thou wilt of my body, my estate, my worldly comfort; but let my soul live before thee. Let me see my sin, and purge me thoroughly from it. p. 52.

Behold of what importance it is, that our propensities be originally good, seeing indulgence and habit interweave them with our very constitution, till they become a second nature, and age confirms instead of eradicating them.

A strong and lively principle of grace may consist with much natural weakness. p. 53.

Unhappy it is for that family, the heads of which entertain opposite views, and pursue separate interests.

It is affecting to think how little scrupu-

lous even good people are about the means of accomplishing what their hearts are set upon; how easily the understanding and the conscience become the dupe of the affections.

Religion, true religion, never does evil that good may come. p. 54.

How uneasily do those possessions sit upon us which we have acquired by improper means. p. 59.

This indeed was the bitterness of death, to "feel how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child." p. 59.

Thus lived and died Isaac the son of Abraham, a man of contemplation, piety, and peace. A man of few and slight infirmities; of many and eminent virtues. A man, whom Providence tried with multiplied and severe afflictions; and whom faith strengthened to bear them with patience and fortitude. His story comes home to the breast and bosom of every man. His

excellencies are such as all may, by due cultivation, acquire; his virtue such as all may imitate. His faults are those to which even good men are liable, and which they are the more concerned to avoid, or to amend. To young men we would hold him up as a pattern of filial tenderness and submission. He possessed in an eminent degree, that most amiable quality of ingenuous youth, dutiful respect to his mother. He cherished her with pious attention while she lived, and sincerely lamented her in death; till duty called him to drop the grateful and affectionate son, in the loving and faithful husband. So long as Abraham lived, Isaac had no will but the will of his father. The master of a family may learn of him domestic piety and devotion, conjugal fidelity, prudent foresight, persevering industry. The selfish and contentious are reproved by the example of his moderation, by his patience under unkindness and injustice, by his meek surrender of an undoubted right, for the sake of peace. Let the aged consider him well, and imitate

his sweetness of temper, his resignation under affliction, his gentle requital of deception and insult, his superiority to the world, his composure in the prospect of dissolution, and the faith which triumphed over death and the grave. Let the affluent and the prosperous learn of him to adorn high rank, by humility and condescension; and the wretched to endure distress with fortitude and resignation. Let his faults be forgotten, and his infirmities covered; or remembered only as a reproof and admonition to ourselves. And let us be followers together of him, and of all them who "through faith and patience inherit the promises." p. 61.

When great men are to be sought for, the mind that is governed by worldly ideas rushes straight to the palaces of kings, or enters into the cabinet where statesmen assemble, or attends the footsteps of the warrior over the ensanguined field. But reason and religion conduct us in far different paths, and present us with far different

objects. They discover to us many a time true greatness under the obscure roof of a cottage, or the spreading branches of a great tree. They exhibit dignity and consequence, affixed not to the royal sceptre, but to the shepherd's crook; and feelingly teach us that what is highly prized among men is of little estimation in the sight of God. p. 63.

It is a dreadful thing to get into a course and habit of acting amiss. When once we have got a favourite object in view, how every thing is made to bend to it! p. 65.

Observe how cautiously, and fearfully, and slow, the footsteps of the deceitful must proceed the moment that the conscience swerves from truth and rectitude, the man becomes jealous, and anxious, and timid. But integrity advances with firmness and intrepidity.

Of all the passions of our nature, there is none so steady, uniform, and consistent as avarice. It never tires by exercise, never

loses sight of its object; it gathers strength by gratification, grows vigorous by old age, and inflames the heart when the vital fluid can hardly force a passage through it. p. 68.

It is a good thing for a young man to feel his own weight, "to bear the yoke in his youth." At ease, and in a multitude we forget God—in retirement and danger, we learn and feel our dependence on him.

At what stage, or in what condition of human life can a man say, Now my heart is at rest, now my wishes are accomplished, now my happiness is complete? By what unaccountably untoward circumstances is the comfort of the worthiest, best ordered, most prosperous families oftimes marred and destroyed! Not through vice only do we suffer, but up to some piece of imprudence, or inadvertency; up to some trifling infirmity in our nature, or some petty fault in our conduct, our greatest calamities may easily be traced. One man has made his fortune, as it is called, but he has impaired his health in the acquisition of it, or made

shipwreck of a good conscience. Another inherits a fine estate; but goes childless. There we behold a numerous and promising family of children; but the wretched parents have hardly bread to give them: and here, both progeny and plenty; but hatred, and jealousy, and strife, banish tranquillity and ease. The heart of this child is corrupted through indulgence; the spirit of that one is broken by severity. p. 74.

Happily, calamity strengthens that soul which it is unable to subdue. The mind, forced back upon itself, finds in itself resources which it knew not of before, and the man who has learned to seek relief in religion, knows where to fly in every time of need. p. 77.

As every blessing of life has its corresponding inconvenience, so every evil has its antidote. p. 89.

Avarice seldom chooses to avow its real motives. What will not this base passion

make a man do? To deceive the unsuspecting and unwary; to oppress the weak; to practise upon the stranger, are among its simpler and more customary operations. If there be a crime blacker than another; if, satan, there be a purpose thou wouldst accomplish, which modesty shudders to think of, which the hand trembles to perpetrate, from which the conscience in horror recoils; infuse into some dark heart the demon of covetousness, the love of money: place gain in one eye, prostitution and parricide in the other, and the work is done. p. 91.

The good things of life seem, to the superficial and discontented, to be unequally divided; but there is no balance so exact as that in which all conditions and all events are weighed. The great Governor of the world does not indeed conform himself in the dispensations of his providence, to the misconceptions and prejudices of short-sighted, erring men; but he is affording ignorant, erring men, if they will but be

attentive, perpetual cause to adore and admire his wisdom and justice, his mercy and faithfulness. p. 93.

How odious, how pitiable are the sentiments, the looks, and the language of passion, to the calm and dispassionate; nay, to the passionate man himself, when the fit is over, and passion has spent itself!

My fair hearers, presume not too far on the fondness of your loving and affectionate husbands. Be calm, be moderate, be unassuming, be reasonable, be submissive, and ye are every thing. Be arrogant, impetuous, self-sufficient, imperious, unreasonable, and ye sink into nothing. I tremble to think of the dreadful length women will go to gratify their spleen. O, my gentle friends, you are yourselves the framers of your own allotments. *Be yourselves*, and I will answer for my own sex. But quit the ground on which God and nature have placed you, and you are indeed to be pitied. If I might venture to hazard an opinion which I am convinced by experience to be well founded, you much

oftener lose your object by over-eagerness than by inattention. You may, now and then, succeed by address or vehemence, or force; but you will succeed much more certainly, and more pleasantly by meekness, and gentleness, and submission. p. 94.

Our heaviest crosses arise out of our dearest comforts; and the pursuits of "vanity," issue in "vexation of spirit." Thus, all things conspire to give full assurance to the children of men, "that this is not their rest;" and invite them to seek "another country, that is an heavenly," where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain," and "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. p. 95.

What a destroyer of human comfort is wealth, that universal object of pursuit! In one shape or another, this evil affection, the love of riches, is, I am afraid, at the bottom of most of the ill we do, and of most of the ills which we suffer. p. 104.

The vision of the Almighty is not only

with them that fear him, to direct and comfort them, but sometimes also with them that fear him not, to restrain, to threaten, and to terrify them. p. 105.

Ah! why should so many wretched brothers as there are of us, pass through a world in which there is so much unavoidable misery; estranged from one another; or madly, wantonly, wickedly interrupt and disturb each other's passage, by bitterness and wrath! What wretched things are wealth, and pomp, and state, and power, which will not permit brothers to live together in love as they might, and as, but for one or other of these disturbers of human quiet, they would do!

Let the lower ranks of mankind rejoice, that a gracious Providence, in withholding from them affluence, and station, and distinction, has left them a blessing greater than all put together, friendship, and the means of exercising and enjoying it. Parents, as ye love your children, and wish to have them near you, and to bless you with

a sight of their health and prosperity, be moderate in your views and efforts concerning them. Prospects of ambition, or of avarice, will of necessity banish them from your sight, will separate them from each other, will scatter them upon the face of the earth. p. 118.

How much better is it to go childless, than have children to be the grief of a man's heart? p. 127.

It is no easy matter to live in an idolatrous, or irreligious country, without losing a sense of religion, or acquiring a wrong one. This is one of the great evils which attend travelling into distant lands. Our young men who reside long abroad, whatever else they bring back to their native country, generally drop by the way the pious principles which were instilled into them in their youth. p. 128.

We mourn to think on the prevalence of those fiery and ungovernable passions

which separate, and scatter, and alienate those whom God and nature designed to live together, and to love one another; and which robs human life of many instances of felicity which might have been in it. p. 133.

Little does that man consult either the credit or the comfort of his son, who breeds him to no useful employment: for indolence is the nurse of vice, the parent of shame, the source of misery. p. 137.

Parents, as ye love your repose, as you value your children, as you would have them dwell together in unity, as ye would not put a dagger into a brother's hand to shed a brother's blood, guard yourselves well against partial affections: or, if unhappily you have conceived them, conceal it from every eye, let not the favourite see it, let not his rival suspect it, let reason, let religion, let that very partiality itself teach you to be wise and just. Parents, as ye prize the understanding, the virtue, the true

dignity of your children, let them never be taught to think that dress confers consequence, that finery implies worth, that the body deserves more attention than the mind. Let not even your daughters be led, through your silly vanity, to believe that any part of their excellence consists in the splendour of their appearance. But still inculcate upon them, that a mind stored with virtues, with modesty, meekness, gentleness, patience, humility, is, both to God and man, a sight infinitely more pleasing than the most beautiful person adorned with jewels and lace: if these or any of these be wanting, let them know early, and hear frequently, that cleanliness and decency are virtues which they ought to acquire and to practice; but that a curiously ornamented body is, to a discerning eye, nothing but the indication and the wretched, tawdry covering of a naked soul. p. 138.

If there be such a thing as pure and perfect joy upon earth, it is that which fills the heart of a parent, when he hears of the

wisdom, the virtue and the prosperity of a darling child. 'If there be sorrow that admits not of consolation, it is the sorrow of a father for the vice or folly of an ungracious, thankless son, and for the misery in which he has plunged himself. p. 191.

The heart that has been long inured to affliction, interprets every appearance against itself. p. 193.

One hundred and thirty years of woe, and seventeen of comfort and happiness, come both at length to a period. Let the wretched think of this, and bear their affliction with fortitude; let the prosperous consider it well, that they "be not high-minded but fear." How dreadful is that misery which issues in despair of change! how exquisite the happiness which fills every faculty of the soul, and whose measure is eternity! p. 200.

The highest respect we can pay the dead, is to fulfil their living desires. p. 212.

The events of a short and uncertain life upon earth, derive all their importance from the relation which they bear to a future and eternal state of existence. Remove the prospects of immortality, and what is left worthy the attention and pursuit of a man? What is reputation? A breath of empty air: honour, a bubble; riches, a bird forever on the wing; youth, beauty, health, fading flowers of the season; the splendour of kings, childish pageantry; a crown, a toy. That alone is valuable which time cannot impair, nor mortality destroy; that which though the man die, continues to live and speak; that which, despised or neglected of men, is of high estimation in the sight of God. If in this life only there were hope, the happiest of mankind were a wretched, dark, comfortless being. But for the consolations of religion, Jacob must have sunk under the accumulated weight of calamity upon calamity: and Joseph destitute of a principle of grace in the heart, had fallen in the hour of temptation, or despaired in the day of adversity; had

risen into pride when exalted to honour, or deviated into resentment and revenge when armed with power. p. 218.

Pity is a native plant in a noble heart. p. 239.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE THIRD VOLUME

OF

HUNTER'S SACRED BIOGRAPHY.

The most pernicious designs, the most malevolent purposes, are frequently found to clothe themselves in smiles; often while mischief lies brooding in men's hearts, "their words are smoother than oil." The father of lies himself can have recourse to truth if it be likely to serve his turn; and the enemy of all goodness will condescend to quote that Scripture which he hates, if it can help him to an argument on the occasion. *Vol.* iii. p. 16.

Early in life was he visited with the loss of sight, and thereby exposed to much mortification and dejection of spirit. p. 21.

The history of mankind contains many a lamentable detail of the sad reverses to which human affairs are liable; of the affluent, by unforeseen, unavoidable calamity, precipitated * into indigence; of greatness in eclipse; of the mighty fallen; of princes dethroned, banished, put to death. In some instances of this sort, we see the unhappy sufferers making a virtue of necessity, and bearing their afflictions † with a certain degree of patience and magnanimity; but in general, sudden and great distress either sours or depresses the spirit, and men submit to the will of Providence with so ill a grace, that it is evident they are not under the power of religion, and that they flee not for consolation to the prospects of immortality. p. 27.

To be either vain of one's ancestry, or ashamed of it, is equally the mark of a grovelling spirit. Art thou highly descended, my friend? Let high birth inspire

* Tumbled. † Misfortunes.

high, that is, worthy, generous sentiments. Beware of disgracing reputable descent, by sordid, vulgar, vicious behaviour. Hast thou nothing to boast of in respect of pedigree? strive to lay the foundation of thine own nobility: convince the fools of the world, that goodness is true greatness; that a catalogue of living virtues is much more honourable than a long list of departed names. p. 30.

Ease and affluence generally harden the heart. If it be well with the selfish man himself, he little cares what others endure. But religion teaches another lesson: "Love to God whom we have not seen," will always be productive of "love to men whom we have seen."

There is something wonderfully pleasing to a soul in trouble, to see one who might have shunned it, and have turned away from the sufferer, out of pure love drinking from the same bitter cup, and submitting to the same calamity. p. 31.

The same spirit that leads men to commit cruelty or injustice, leads them also to vindicate and support their ill conduct. p. 32.

Wise is that father, kind and just to his children, who, whatever his station, possessions, or prospects may be, brings up his sons and his daughters to some useful employment; for idleness is not more odious, dishonourable, and contemptible, than it is inimical to happiness, and irreconcileable to inward peace. p. 33.

That great man had now passed the second great period of his life in the humble station of a shepherd, and the shepherd too of another man's flock.

As it is never too early, so it is never too late to serve God and to do good to men; and true wisdom consists in waiting for and following the call of heaven, not in anticipating and outrunning it. Abraham was turned out a wanderer and an exile at seventy-five. And Moses at four-score was sent upon an enterprise, which it required

much courage to undertake, much vigour to conduct and support, and a great length of time to execute. p. 40.

As there is a sinful pride which urges men to seek stations and employments, to which they have neither pretension, title, nor qualification; so there is a sinful humility, which shrinks from the call of God, which, in the guise of self-denial, contains the spirit of rebellion and disobedience; and which, under the affectation of undervaluing and debasing our own persons and qualities, indirectly charges God with foolishness, in choosing an instrument so inapt and improper. Such humility is the very essence of pride. p. 46.

Perpetual sunshine suits not the state of the natural world; perpetual success is by no means favourable either to human happiness or virtue. Hunger is necessary to give a relish to food; the gloom of winter is the happiest recommendation of the cheerfulness and bloom of spring. p. 52.

No circumstances of prudence or conveniency, can ever be with propriety urged as a dispensation with a clearly commanded duty: that as there may be a sinful undervaluing of the feelings, prejudices, and inclinations of our near and dear relations, so there may be a sinful tenderness for, and compliance with them, to the neglect of God's known and declared will, and at the risk of falling under his just censure. He who is to be the interpreter of the law to others, ought in all points to be blameless, and in all things conformed to the law himself. p. 57.

It happened to Moses and Aaron, as it sometimes befalls men actuated by a similar good intention, but with less title and encouragement, their interference hurts those whom it was meant to serve; and they have the mortification of seeing the miseries of their poor brethren cruelly increased through what might be deemed their own zeal and officiousness. p. 61.

But alas! the messenger himself has caught the desponding spirit of the unhappy men whom he had been last visiting. p. 63.

Who can flatter himself with the thought, that the errors of his life were the mere inadvertencies of haste and inattention? who can say of himself, "this fault I corrected, as soon as I discovered it? having been once made sensible of the danger and wickedness of that sinful course, I instantly forsook it, and have returned to it no more. Smarting from the effects of my folly, I have never again dared to provoke the lash of my Father's chastening rod. The resolutions which I made in the day of sickness, and sorrow, and calamity, I have faithfully remembered, and diligently kept. p. 83.

This leads me to remark, the wisdom of giving up, at the command of God, with alacrity, what we must give up at last, whether we will or not. p. 84.

Unhappily for us, our will stands but too often in opposition to the will of God. When they come to clash, who ought in reason to give way? who must of necessity submit? Knowest thou not, O man, that to destroy thyself thou needest but to follow thy own head-strong inclination. But who ever made a sacrifice of inclination to duty, and had reason to repent of it? Who knows not, that to yield submission is to obtain a triumph? p. 85.

When men have finally banished from them their advisers and monitors, and when God has ceased to be a reprover to them, their destruction cannot be very distant. Better it is to have the law to alarm, to threaten, and to chastise us, than to have it in anger altogether withdrawn. Better is a conscience that disturbs and vexes, than a conscience laid fast asleep, than a conscience "seared as with a hot iron." p. 91.

Our most perfect enjoyments in this world, and our highest attainments, have a

mixture of bitterness or of insipidity attending them. p. 96.

And if erroneous, innocently so. p. 108.

Inconsiderate man must have his attention roused and fixed by strong and striking circumstances.

Were the eye opened to see God as he is, were the powers of an invisible world habitually felt, every creature, every season, every event, would possess a quickening, an active, a constraining influence over us.

A representation, perhaps, of the mixed nature of every sublunary enjoyment; and of the wholesome uses of unpalatable adversity.

It is the mere deception of vanity and self-love to suppose, that "if one were to arise from the dead, we would be persuaded;" that if we saw a miracle wrought, we would believe; that if we heard Christ teach in our streets, we would "forsake all and follow him." The man whom the usual

appearances of nature do not move, would soon become insensible to more uncommon phenomena. For extraordinary things frequently repeated, are extraordinary no longer, and consequently soon lose their force. If the daily miracles of God's mercy and loving-kindness fail to convince men, what reason is there to hope, that mere exertions of power would produce a happier effect? If Christ, speaking by his word and ministering servants, be treated with neglect, is it likely that his person would be held in veneration? If men "hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Is it not notorious, that Christ's personal ministrations were slighted, his miracles vilified, his character traduced?

p. 132.

Every passion when it becomes predominant, renders us silly and unreasonable; and none more so than fear. In danger and distress it is natural, but it is foolish, to impute to another the evils which we fear or feel. It seems to be an alleviation of our

own misery, if we can contrive to shift the blame of it upon the shoulders of our neighbour.

A high and responsible situation is far from being an enviable one. If things go well, the conductor of the undertaking receives but a divided, a mutilated praise. If an enterprise fail, the whole blame of the miscarriage is imputed to him. p. 133.

"Lord, we will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Human conduct is a woeful inversion of this rule. We torment ourselves about the event over which we have no power, and trifle with the commandment with which alone we have to do. p. 141.

Unless the mind be under the regulating power of religion, it will be perpetually losing its balance, and changing its tenor: at one time accelerated into indecent and dangerous speed, through the impulse of desire, ambition, or revenge; at another it is chilled into languor and inaction,

through fear, despondency, and disappointment. p. 159.

Insolent, fierce, and overbearing in prosperity, the unsteady creature becomes grovelling, dispirited, and mean in adversity.

Men walk by sight, not by faith. They feel the powers of the world that is, and are insensible of that which is to come. They look at "things temporal," and neglect those "which are unseen and eternal."

While then we discover, deplore, and condemn a selfish, a perverse, and discontented spirit, and an unbelieving heart, in others, let us study, by the grace of God, to reform the same or like dispositions in ourselves.

At length they quit the scene of their terror and of their triumph; for the world admits not of a long continuance of either. p. 161.

Always too little, or too much! here there are children and penury; there affluence and sterility. This year there is drought

parching and consuming every plant of the field; the next an overflowing flood sweeping every thing before it; and unhappy mortals are continually augmenting the necessary and unavoidable evils of human life, by peevishness and discontent.

Oblige an ungrateful person ever so often, and disappoint or oppose him once, and lo, the memory of a thousand benefits is instantly lost. For it is with this spirit as with that of ambition: nothing is attained in the eye of ambition, while there is yet one thing to be attained. All the favour of Ahasuerus avails Haman nothing, while Mordecai the Jew sits in the king's gate. So ingratitude says nothing is granted, while one thing is denied me.

A worldly mind under distress either flies to the creature for help, or accuses the creature as the cause of its woe. Piety leads the soul directly to God; it views the calamity as his appointment; and finds its removal, its remedy or its compensation in the divine mercy. p. 162.

Mistaken in both, a carnal mind is easily unhinged, and soon satisfied. Like children they are put out of humour with a straw, and presently pacified they know not why; and behold unbelief lying at the root of both one and the other. Now eager to get home before the time; by and by drowning all thoughts and hopes of it in the bauble of the present hour. p. 166.

Never did any good come of sitting down contentedly in temporal possessions. No sooner do men become easy and comfortable in their circumstances, than they grow capricious and fantastical in their wishes and desires. If Providence visit them not with scarcity, or unpleasantness of water; their own restless appetite shall visit them with an absurd and unreasonable craving for flesh. The fruit and shade of the palm tree, and the deliciousness of a fresh spring, please not long, put an end to novelty, and farewell delight. p. 167.

That proud word independence, is con-

tinually in men's mouths, and the thing itself is in their hearts; not considering, that the real happiness of man consists in mutual connexion and dependence.

No fulness and no excellency of created comforts will produce real happiness to rational beings, without the aid of religion.

During the abode of Israel in Egypt, the observance of the sabbath had been greatly neglected, if not altogether disused. The religious principle of course must have been much weakened, if not wholly destroyed. For there can be no good government but what is founded upon religion; and religion cannot long exist in any degree of either fervour or purity, where no attention is paid to that day. p. 177.

"He who gathered much, had nothing over; and he that gathered little, had no lack." A man has just what he uses and no more. With a chest full of gold, he has a desire to eat but twice or thrice a day at most. With a thousand suits of apparel in his wardrobe, he can use but one at a time.

His neighbour, therefore, who has but one dinner, and one coat at once, is upon the whole, just as rich as he. Beyond what nature requires, reason approves, and the Almighty crowns with his blessing, all is childish and fantastical. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." If this were felt and understood as it ought, we should see less eagerness, rapacity and selfishness in one part of mankind, and less unthankfulness and discontent in another.

Children cannot be too simply clothed and fed. Solicit the palate by delicacies, and you kindle a fire in the imagination to which no wealth can administer a sufficient supply of fuel, which no reason can keep within bounds, which will certainly produce a thousand real evils, and render the possession of the true* felicities of life tasteless and insipid. Teach young ones to value themselves on dress and appearance,

* Real.

and you undermine the fabric of their true consequence. In proportion as you lead them to derive their importance from the adorning of their bodies, you strip and expose their minds. p. 179.

The reconciliation of interrupted friendship, is one of the chief delights of human life. The extatic pleasure of meeting again after long absence, persons whom we dearly love, obliterates in a moment, the pain of separation; and one hour of sweet communication compensates the languor, solicitude, and gloom of many years. p. 184.

The present pressure always seems the heaviest.

We expect more from the world than it possibly can bestow; and when we discover its insufficiency, we charge God foolishly; and because we have not every thing that we wish, we are satisfied with nothing. Solacing ourselves, like Jonah, under the shadow of a gourd, we fancy it is a perennial shelter. We see not the worm which is gnawing its root; and when it is smitten down and

withers, we are ready to say with the sullen, testy prophet, "we do well to be angry." p. 186.

God in the failure of our earthly comforts, intends not our mortification and ruin, but our wisdom and improvement.

If in their calmest moments, men are often incapable of reasoning justly, and distinguishing accurately, is it any wonder to find them, in the very tide and whirlwind of passion, acting foolishly and unreasonably?

To what a severe trial was the temper of this meekest of all men now put? What so provoking as to meet with censure, when we are conscious of meriting praise? What so galling as to have the calamities of others charged upon us as crimes, to be accused as culpable merely because we have been unsuccessful? * p. 187.

This teaches a lesson of no mean importance, in friendship among men, namely, to

* Unfortunate.

cultivate with diligence and assiduity the charities which we have in common, and to suffer those things to rest and sleep, which if stirred and awakened, are likely to disturb and separate us.

It is not the design of Providence that we should think exactly the same way on all points. But, shall I agree with my brother in nothing, because we happen to differ in one thing? p. 196.

It is difficult to say whether men suffer most from their own folly, or from the cruelty and injustice of others. We generally find, that when evil from without would, for a while, permit wretched mortals to breathe and be at peace, they perversely become self-tormentors, and ingeniously contrive sources of vexation to themselves; and, which is the greater evil of the two? That undoubtedly, of which we are the authors to ourselves. p. 199.

What foe so dreadful as a brother disaffected!

Neither good qualities nor bad are found single in the human breast. p. 201.

The mistakes and miscarriages of the world arise from the weakness and wickedness of men; at one time over-rating their talents, and thrusting themselves forward into situations for which they are wholly unfit; and at another, through timidity, shrinking from the duties of that station which Providence has assigned them.

p. 203.

The mind of man is formed to desire and to relish variety. The objects with which he is conversant are therefore varied without end, to gratify that desire, and to correspond with that relish. The glare of perpetual sunshine and the fervid heat of a continual* summer, would speedily oppress and destroy mankind: but, relieved by the tranquillity of darkness, the freshness of spring, the sedateness of autumn, and

* Eternal.

even the gloom of winter, they become no less grateful than they are beneficial.

The events of human life, (like the objects of sense) are endlessly variegated. Wretched were the dull stagnation of constant prosperity, success and ease. Intolerable would be the agitation and distress of unceasing, unabating, unrelenting toil, pain, disappointment, and vexation of spirit. But one thing being set over against another, the great, the prosperous, and the happy are for ever admonished, reproved and brought low; the poor, the despised, and the miserable are cheered, supported and exalted.

The antiquarian and the naturalist, the politician and the legislator, the poet and the philosopher, the moralist and the gospel minister,* the man of retirement and the man of the world, the man of reason and the man of fancy, all find in scripture an helper toward the discovery of truth, and the attainment of happiness; a guide

* Divine.

to the understanding, a corrector and supporter of the imagination, a comforter of the heart, a teacher of wisdom, a rule of faith, a source of joy. p. 212.

True piety, while it reposes entire confidence in God, will never presumptuously load Providence with what is the proper work and business of man. Diligence and foresight, as well as faith and hope, are its genuine offspring. p. 214.

Rejoice, O man! that the world knows thee not, cares not for thee, condescends not to trouble thy repose.

The service of fear or of necessity is slow, reluctant, partial, and imperfect; the labour of love is cheerful, active, and persevering. p. 218.

By attempting what was beyond his strength to bear or perform, he was in the way of quickly rendering himself unable to do any thing at all. p. 219.

What are the greatest and most shining abilities, destitute of a principle of conscience? they are but a mischievous weapon in the hands of a bad man. A judge, therefore, ought to be a man that fears God, a man, not only restrained by respect to the world, or actuated by regard to reputation: these are found feeble and inefficacious in the hour of temptation; these are fluctuating and unsteady, as the opinions, passions, and interests of men; but the fear of the Lord is a perpetual, unchanging motive and restraint, the same in darkness as in the light, the same in secret as before the eyes of the whole world. p. 220.

In this there is a strong insinuation, that where the love of money predominates, the exercise of all other necessary and suitable qualities are likely to be obstructed or perverted; ability under such influence rendered only more dangerous and hurtful; the fear of God lulled asleep; the heart hardened, and the conscience, by the strong opiate of gold, reduced to a state of insensibility.

Make men just, gentle, kindly affectioned; make them christians indeed, and then war is at an end; the courts are shut up; then there would be no need of a judge, because there would be no offender. p. 221.

The advice which was wisely and kindly given, is graciously and candidly received. A proud and self-sufficient spirit would have rejected the counsel, however salutary, because tendered by a stranger. But true wisdom only considers whether the hint be useful, practicable, and necessary, without regarding from what quarter it comes. And he was prepared for converse with God, who had learned deference and respect for the opinions of men. p. 222.

It is not fortitude, but folly, unnecessarily to expose ourselves, or those whom we love, to hardships and danger.

To promote the glory of God, his own virtue, and the good of his fellow-creatures, is the great and constant aim of every good man. p. 223.

Happiness consists not in having such and such possessions, but in being fitted to enjoy what we have. p. 229.

What a high value are we taught to put upon time, when we see to what valuable purposes, through the blessing and assistance of heaven, a little time may be made subservient.

He who fears God has nothing else to fear. p. 235.

Wisdom and goodness are the qualities which confer real dignity, and command just homage and respect.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE FOURTH VOLUME

OF

HUNTER'S SACRED BIOGRAPHY.

Men's dexterity, address, perseverance, and success in the pursuit of perishable interests, form an humiliating contrast with their awkwardness, indolence, inattention, and incapacity in their higher, their spiritual and everlasting concerns. Wise in trifles, or to do evil, how to do good they find not. *Vol.* iv. p. 13.

Human purposes are feeble, fluctuating, and unenlightened; obstructed by unforeseen events, they are constrained to change their direction, and to assume a new form. p. 15.

Bread is not more necessary to the support of human life, than religion is to the happiness of a rational being. p. 24.

Their guilt begins in sinful impatience and presumption. In matters both of life and of religion, men greatly err, when they take upon them to carve for themselves.

Alas! we hate and condemn some sins merely because they are not our own, while we stand chargeable in the sight of God and man, with equal or greater offences of a different kind; so blinded as not to perceive, so self-deluded as not to feel their enormity. p. 42.

Ill gotten wealth never was and never can be a blessing; and unwarrantable devices sooner or later come to entangle the feet of those who use them.

It is dangerous to have the patterns of evil before our eyes. We soon learn to bear with what we see frequently; we are insensibly led to approve what we have learned to suffer without being shocked; and what we heartily approve, we are not far from adopting. p. 44.

The prevalence of evil practices is a

lamentable thing, but the establishment of wrong principles is much worse. The wholesomest stream may be accidentally tainted and polluted, and work itself pure again; but if the fountain be poisonous, nothing but death can flow from it. p. 46.

When thou hast thoroughly searched and known thyself, no account of human frailty will appear exaggerated.

Think not that gold is the only deity which men adore. On searching into thy own bosom, some lurking imp, of different form, complexion and texture will be found; hid in close disguise, unknown indeed of men; but to the eye of God and conscience clearly confessed. Down with it; it is thy dishonour, and threatens thy ruin. p. 50.

A little knowledge puffeth up; but modesty and humility are the constant attendants on profound wisdom. p. 68.

Early habits of acquaintance with God, and employment in his service, are youth's

best security and preservative against sin, and the surest foundation of honour and usefulness, of distinction and comfort in advanced age.

A man must be formed to command by obeying. p. 70.

Let us be solicitous to obtain spiritual blessings in the first place, and the temporal good things which we prized not, asked not, may perhaps come unexpected, unsought. p. 76.

Not human sagacity, but divine mercy, discovers and prepares a retreat for the miserable. p. 77.

We naturally assume the tone of those with whom we frequently converse, and whom we dearly love. p. 81.

The choicest of God's gifts, and humility is one of the most precious, come not with observation, announce not their approach, are not first visible to the possessor. p. 84.

It is a wretched ambition merely to shine. The great aim of a teacher should be to communicate knowledge; and he shews himself to be possessed of most, who knows best how to convey it to others. He is the truly rich man, who, by the proper use of his wealth, assists in making many rich; not he who possesses a vast hoard which he knows not how to enjoy; nor he who makes an ostentatious display of riches, merely to insult his poorer neighbour. And he who speaks three words in a known language, to the edification of the hearer, has more real learning than the babbler of ten thousand, in a language which no one understands. p. 88.

Vain glory always defeats the purpose which it had formed; humility as certainly gains the point at which it aimed not. p. 90.

A common table is the badge of familiarity and friendship, is the sweetest emblem of domestic union and happiness; of paternal concern, of filial tenderness, of brotherly love. p. 111.

Those examples, therefore, are to be considered as the most useful, as I flatter myself they are more frequent, which exhibit a mixture in which goodness predominates, and finally prevails; in which virtue is seen wading through difficulties, struggling with temptation, recovering from error, gathering strength from weakness, learning wisdom from experience, sustaining itself by dependence upon God; seeking refuge from its own frailty and imperfection in divine compassion, and crowned, at length, with victory over all opposition, and the smiles of approving heaven.

Exposed to no special danger in infancy, the subject of no interesting memoir in early life, distinguished by no memorable talents or exploits in manhood, we see Aaron far declined into the vale of years before we see him at all; and for all our knowledge of him, earlier or later, we are indebted to the labours of his younger brother. His first introduction, however, to our acquaintance, places him in a most interesting, respectable, and honourable point of view.

We behold a venerable man, fourscore and upwards, agitated with public cares, and moved with fraternal tenderness and affection, on his way through the wilderness, in quest of his long absent brother. p. 122.

Can we avoid reflecting on the wonderful equality with which nature distributes her gifts? In conception who so sublime, in composition who so elegant, in narration who so simple, in written language who so perspicuous, so forcible, so impressive, as Moses?

Who is so favoured of nature and Providence, as to possess every talent, every blessing? Who so hardly dealt with, as to be left destitute of all?

The praise of eloquence certainly belongs to Aaron, for it is bestowed by him who is best able to estimate his own gifts. "Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well."

It is certainly the most agreeable of all tasks, to announce to the wretched the period of their misery. p. 124.

Christians, we come not to you with the eloquence of an Aaron; but we bear a message infinitely more important than his. Our "speech and preaching is not with enticing words of man's wisdom:" O that it might be "in demonstration of the spirit, and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." p. 125.

"Behold, how good a thing it is," in every point of view, "and how pleasant, for brethren to dwell together in unity!" By concord, the weakest powers grow and stand: through disunion, the strongest are dissolved and fall. p. 128.

Moses had no choice at all in the case, and presumed to exercise none. God had declared his will, and that was sufficient to him, and will be so to every good man. p. 130.

Be instructed by the history of Aaron to begin to live betimes: if not to public observation, utility, and importance, at least

to the purposes of piety, and to the duties and virtues of the private man, and of the citizen. He lived long in obscurity, before he arose into distinction, and was nurtured in the school of affliction, for station and eminence. And it is generally found that those persons fill high and difficult situations most respectably, who arrive at them through painful study, many obstacles, and much opposition. p. 131.

The eloquence of an Aaron is, perhaps, more rarely to be found, than a man of a hundred and twenty-two years old. Covet, then, and cultivate the virtues which are attainable by all, and are in themselves infinitely more valuable than the gifts which are bestowed more sparingly, which do not always prove a blessing to their owner, and are not always accompanied with true goodness, which alone is in the sight of God of great price. p. 132.

The love of this world has encroached upon, and extinguished the spirit of religion; and a misguided, ill-informed religion has

attempted to detach some men from the duties and employments of life. Men ever in extremes, have either banished God entirely from their thoughts, or affected a higher degree of reverence for his service, by an avowed neglect of some of the more obvious and more important dictates of his will. p. 134.

But, alas! what condition of humanity admits of certain, unmixed, or lasting felicity? p. 144.

The ministers of religion are, by their office and station, perpetually admonished to shun every appearance of what is mean, selfish, or ungenerous. They are appointed of God to aid, instruct, and comfort their fellow-creatures; to promote their best interests; to cherish in them the best and noblest principles of their nature: and they are urged to perform this, by the highest considerations which the human mind can feel. Whatever be the dispensation, the

spirit of the office and the nature of the service are the same. p. 145.

The fire once kindled supernaturally by the celestial flame, was to be kept alive by human care and attention. Miraculous interpositions of Providence are not to be expected, as an indulgence to carelessness and sloth. He only who diligently exercises the powers which God has given him, who employs the means which Providence has furnished, and which conscience approves, can with confidence look up to heaven, and rejoice in hope of divine assistance. Would you that the sacred flame of devotion, of charity, should live in your hearts, should glow upon your tongues, resort daily to the altar of God, and preserve its activity by "a live coal" from thence, then your faces shall shine, then your lips shall overflow with the law of kindness, then your hands shall open to the sons of want, then you shall "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." p. 147.

"And Aaron looked upon Miriam, and behold, she was leprous." A shocking example of divine displeasure against one of the most odious of crimes. My fair hearers, let me whisper an advice in your ears. I am no common-place declaimer against your sex; I honour it, and I wish to improve it; you must hear me with the greater attention, and mark what I say: you lie under a general imputation, respecting the vices of the tongue; but general imputations are for the most part ill-founded. I do not mean, however, to insinuate that you are totally innocent, or more so than the other sex: for your affections are eager, and what the heart feels, by the eyes or the tongue you will express; and that expression is sometimes too strong for either piety or prudence. p. 158.

Women, young women, good young women, think they are only yielding to the impulse of a pious affection, when they applaud or censure this or the other public character. I am no stranger to what is by some termed

religious conversation, and I am seriously concerned about the topics of it. It generally turns upon persons, not things. Now, it ought to be just the reverse. Persons always mislead us, for no one is wholly impartial: but truth is eternal and unchangeable. Apply then the test—does the conversation dwell upon this man or his neighbour—check it, away with it; what have the interests of piety to do in the case? Call no man master in sacred things, but Christ; and take care that you measure neither orthodoxy, sense, nor virtue, by the imperfect, fluctuating standard of your own caprice, affection, or understanding. Were similar punishment instantly to follow the vices of the tongue, as in the case of Miriam, I shudder to think how many a fair face, now lovely to the sight, must, by to-morrow morning, stand in need of a veil; but not for the same reason that the face of Moses did, on his descending from the mount, to temper its lustre; but to shroud its loathsomeness and deformity. Consider what hath been said, and "set a watch on the door of your

lips," and "keep the heart with all diligence." p. 159.

Moses delineates Miriam's character with singular conciseness and simplicity. The hand which she had in his preservation, when he was exposed, in early infancy, upon the Nile, procures her an interest in his affection, and in those of his readers, which the blameableness of some parts of her after conduct is unable wholly to destroy. Our censure of her envy and malignity, in more advanced life, is somewhat softened by the recollection of her youthful * tenderness, attachment, vigilance, and address; and, while we condemn the vehemence of her spirit, and the unruliness of her tongue, the edge of resentment is blunted, when we see her punished there, where a female is most vulnerable, in the fairness of her looks, and the agreeableness of her person, and we heartily join in the prayer of Aaron in her behalf: "Alas, my lord, let

* Childish.

her not be as one dead; and in that of Moses himself, "Heal her, now, O God, I beseech thee." From thence to the hour of her death, a period of thirty-seven years, the history is entirely silent concerning her, and this is, perhaps, the highest praise that can be bestowed upon her. The sharp reproof which she had received for presuming to intermeddle in public affairs, had taught her, we are bound in charity to believe, that the post of honour, for a woman, is a private station; that she is then most distinguished, most respectable, most valuable, when the world knows and talks least about her. p. 167.

Of all the evil propensities to which human nature is subject, there is no one so general, so insinuating, so corruptive, and so obstinate, as the love of money. It begins to operate early, and it continues to the end of life. One of the first lessons which children learn, and one which old men never forget, is the value of money. The covetous seek and guard it for its own sake.

and the prodigal himself must first be avaricious, before he can be profuse. This, of all our passions, is best able to fortify itself by reason, and is the last to yield to the force of reason. It most unremittingly engages the attention, and calls into their fullest exertion all our powers of body and of mind. Ambition and pride, those powerful motives of human conduct, are but ministering servants to avarice. Reputation and power are pursued chiefly as the means of procuring wealth; and all the fierce contentions which have distracted the world, and deluged it with blood, may be traced up to an eager desire to obtain the territory, or the treasure of another. Age, which blunts all other appetites, only whets this; and after the heart is dead to every other joy, it lives to the dear, the inextinguishable delight of saving and hoarding. In exact proportion to their incapacity and disinclination to make use of money, is the violence of men's thirst to possess it; and on the threshold of eternity, it cleaves to them, as if life were just beginning. Philo-

sophy combats, satire exposes, religion condemns it in vain: it yields neither to argument, nor ridicule, nor conscience. Like the lean kine in Pharaoh's dream, it devours all that comes near it, and yet continues as hungry and meagre as ever. If a representation of the odiousness, criminality, and danger of this vile affection can be of any use, it must be to those whose hearts are not yet hardened, whose consciences are not yet blinded by habits of indulgence in it; for if it has once gotten possession of the mind, you might as easily reinvigorate feeble age by a discourse on the joys and advantages of youth, or restore a constitution wasted through consumption by an elaborate declamation on the blessing of health. Avarice, with the deaf adder, "will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." p. 174.

It is one thing to have a clear, enlightened head, and another, to have an affectionate and obedient heart. It is a blessed union where they meet, but the former without

the latter, only renders wickedness more conspicuous, and condemnation more just. p. 181.

It is melancholy to think, that from the beginning to this day, men have been more eager to bring mischief upon others, than to procure good to themselves.

The great evil is, men engage in transitory pursuits as if they were immortal; and had they the power, together with the inclination, would prosecute momentary offences with everlasting punishments.

What principle so important to individuals and to states, as a principle of true religion! It is a comforter in affliction, a counsellor in darkness and uncertainty, a refuge in danger and distress, a support in death. What so seductive and mischievous, as an erroneous principle of this sort! "If the light that is in men be darkness, how great is that darkness!" p. 185.

Affliction, that wholesome, though unpalatable potion, never leaves the mind exactly where it found it. A cure is either

begun by it, or the distemper is confirmed. The history of Balaam is the illustration of this position. The pain of his foot has only served to whet the asperity of his disposition; and the more he is opposed, the more earnest he is to get forwards. O that the children of light were thus perseverant in a good cause, and not weary of well-doing! p. 209.

Every thing is in its place; every thing is fulfilling the purpose of its Creator; and therefore nothing ought to be mean or contemptible in our eyes. The great Lord of all, exercises a tender concern about the lowest of the brute creation, provides for them, and resents the cruelty and injustice which are offered them. "He feeds the ravens," "the young lions ask their meat from God," "He careth for oxen," "A sparrow falleth not to the ground without our heavenly Father."—Who so lofty as to be beyond his reach, as to defy his power? What so little as to be beneath his notice, or shut out from his pity? There is of

consequence a return of attention and tenderness due from the human race to every order of creatures below themselves, and whose services, whatever their faculties may be, Providence permits them to employ either for pleasure or for use. The power and wisdom which stationed every creature in its proper place, and preserves it there, can at pleasure elevate it to a higher, or depress it to a lower sphere; can confer upon it a force unknown before, or deprive it of what it formerly possessed; can break the strength of Egypt, by an army of frogs, or preserve Daniel unhurt in the midst of the lions; can catch the serpent in his own craftiness, and teach the dull ass speech and reason. p. 210.

A heart wedded to gain, is not to be reasoned out of its favourite pursuit; and unbelief, do what you will, always finds a strong hold whereto it can resort, and which it easily renders impregnable. p. 212.

Human conduct, as far as it is governed

by the spirit of this world, exhibits a wretched and contemptible, but a dangerous and fatal opposition to the will of God. Men would be happy in their own way; but whether they succeed in their pursuits, or whether they fail, they find themselves miserable in the end. God is conducting us, if we would but be conducted, to real and substantial happiness, but it is through a narrow gate, and along a path in many places strewed with thorns. The grievousness of affliction in due season "yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby." p. 216.

When a man finds himself on the brink of the world of spirits, it will afford him but slender consolation, to reflect that he has lived long enough to amass a large estate,* to enjoy a banquet, to attain a post of honour, to acquire a name. And he will feel as little pain and mortification, on the other hand in recollecting that he has pass-

* Fortune.

ed life in obscurity, that he has struggled with poverty, that he has endured unmerited reproach. But this is the folly and the misery of man; we eagerly imbibe and follow the spirit of this world while we live; and fondly dream of assuming, in one propitious instant, the spirit of heaven when we come to die. p. 217.

Avarice will attempt any thing, submit to any thing, commit any thing; will adore the God of Israel, or bend at the altar of Baal, just as it serves the occasion. p. 218.

If we are conscious of the influence of any very powerful propensity, or aversion, it is a just ground of suspicion, that we may be tempted to act unworthily; and it is a powerful admonition to watch our hearts narrowly on the side of that infirmity "which doth more easily beset us." p. 227.

Truth is not injured by being conveyed through an impure channel, and therefore ought not to be rejected on that account.

The word of God shall not fail of its effect, though Balaam, or though satan speak it. It may do good to others, while he who bears it is injured, not benefited. And, surely, when we hear such divine sentences coming from such unhallowed lips, a holy jealousy will be kindled, a holy watchfulness inculcated on all who bring the messages of God to others; as the great apostle of the Gentiles felt and expressed, when he says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be cast away." p. 233.

How greatly do men err in the estimation which they make both of their own qualities and those of others! Those of the head are the objects of universal admiration, the subject of universal praise; those of the heart are lightly esteemed, and do not always escape censure. But apply the balance of the sanctuary, and what a reverse! A little humility outweighs a great deal of learning, faith as a

grain of mustard seed preponderates against a mountain of gold; and charity, though with the simplicity of a child, brings down the scale, against the wit of men, and the eloquence of angels. p. 234.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE FIFTH VOLUME

OF

HUNTER'S SACRED BIOGRAPHY.

Even conscious innocence and integrity, accompanied with good hope toward God, court not the eye of public inquiry, but prefer the secret, silent feast of inward peace, and of divine applause, to the public banquet of innocence proved and proclaimed by sound of trumpet. *Vol.* v. p. 10.

We have studied the noiseless, sequestered, contemplative life of Isaac, and the active, variegated, chequered life of Jacob, his younger son.

In the affliction of Joseph, we felt ourselves afflicted, in his exaltation we rejoiced, and by his virtues and piety, in

every variety of human condition, we received at once instruction and reproof. p.12.

When empty, there is no end to our complaints; when full, we loathe and regret the best things: if we succeed, our prosperity destroys us with folly, insolence, and self-indulgence; if we fail, we are undone through shame, chagrin, and resentment; if we shun the rock of "vanity" on the one side, we are sucked into the whirlpool of "vexation of spirit" upon the other. p. 25.

Men frequently do their duty with so ill a grace, that it becomes as offensive as downright disobedience; the manner of compliance has the air of a refusal.

What an alleviating consideration is it, under the pressure of whatever calamity! "This burden is laid* on me by the hand of my heavenly Father; this is a sore evil, but God can turn it into good."

When we are out of humour at one thing.

* The Original is—imposed.

we are dissatisfied with every person, and every thing.

Objects viewed through the medium of passion, like those strange uncouth appearances which are seen in glasses of a certain construction, have little or no resemblance to what they are in nature and truth. They are distorted and disfigured; magnified to such a degree as to become hideous, or diminished so as to become imperceptible; and according to the fit of the moment, men turn the one end or the other of the perspective to the eye, and what they contemplate is accordingly removed to a great distance, and reduced to nothing, or brought nigh, enlarged, and brightened up. p. 28.

The love of life is not only natural and innocent, but important and necessary. We are instructed to guard, to preserve, to prolong it, at once by the constitution and frame of our nature, and by manifold examples of the highest authority. And while Providence permits the farther extension of it, the reasons and end of that extension are

obviously manifest. Not a single hour is added to the life of any one, merely to make up such a quantity of time. No, every moment is destined to its peculiar purpose, passes to account, calls to its proper use and employment. To dream of premature retirement from the exercise of our faculties and functions, of mere existence without employment, is an attempt to defeat the intention of the Creator in sending us into the world; is a degradation and perversion of the powers of the human mind; is to be dead while we live. The inquiry of a well regulated spirit, to the last, is, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me do?" While any of my powers remain, however blunted, however impaired, to whom shall I dedicate the poor remains? Enfeebled, exhausted as I am, is there no one respect in which I can yet glorify God, or be useful to my fellow creatures? And, to the last, the great Supporter of life, the Ruler of the world, has some command to give, some labour to be performed, some exercise of the hand, the

head, or the heart to enjoin, some purpose of justice or of love to accomplish. p. 50.

Use the world so as not to abuse it, and the Creator is glorified. p. 54.

Exercise your faculties, and they will increase and improve; neglect them, and they will quickly fall into utter decay. p. 55.

Ignorance and uncertainty respecting the termination of our misery, are bitter ingredients in the cup of affliction. p. 62.

How sacred, in the sight of man, ought to be the life of his brother, and every thing relating to its preservation and comfort, his health, his peace, his reputation! To attack him in any of these respects, is to level a blow at his head, or where he feels more sensibly still, at his heart. p. 63.

Moses is now in the last month of his earthly existence; he is "ready to be offered up; the time of his departure is at hand;"

and an illustrious instance his last days exhibit of how much may be done in a little time.

We see here a man living cheerfully, living usefully to the last. Two different and indeed opposite feelings are apt to betray men into the same practical error, that of misspending their time, and neglecting their opportunities—the confidence of living long on the one hand—the near prospect of death on the other. What we imagine it is in our power to do when we please, we are in great danger of not doing at all; and we feel the remorse of occasion for ever lost, ere we are well awake from the dream of a season continually at our disposal; and it is but too common, when thus overtaken, disconcerted and confused, to give up our work in despair. Having much to do, and the time being short, we set down, and lament our folly, and do nothing. Presumption betrays us to-day, diffidence and despondency destroy us to-morrow. p. 71.

Observe the excellency of his spirit, at

this period, a little more particularly. He set a proper value upon life. He desired its continuance, with the feelings natural to a man; he prized it as the gift of God, as the precious season of acting for God, of observing and improving the ways of his providence, of doing good to men, of preparation for eternity. He prayed for its prolongation, without fearing its end; and he thereby reproves that rashness which exposes life to unnecessary danger, that intemperence which wastes and shortens, that indolence and listlessness which dissipate it; and that vice and impiety which clothe death with terror. p. 72.

Blessed is the state of that man to whom life is not a burden, nor death a terror, who has "a desire to depart and to be with Christ," but is willing "to continue in the flesh," for the glory of God, and the good of men; who neither quits his station and duty in life in sullen discontent, nor cleaves to the enjoyments of this world, as one that has no hope beyond the grave. p. 93.

I honour human learning, I admire great talents, I am enchanted with eloquence, but I am persuaded that if saving knowledge be communicated, it is by the quick and powerful energy of God's word; coming not with the allurements of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

The reason I have at present to render for this digression, if it be thought one, is its affording me an opportunity of earnestly recommending to masters and mistresses of families, the regular and progressive use of the scriptures, within the precincts of their private households, for the instruction of their children and servants. I am well aware, that from a diffidence and humility not too severely to be blamed, some younger heads of families are tempted to neglect family worship altogether, because some parts of it they cannot, dare not undertake: that, for example, of addressing God in prayer, as the mouth of their domestic little church. Let them begin with reading the Scriptures audibly*: for this surely they

* Aloud the word of God.

have courage sufficient. They will be brought to pray insensibly, they will soon cease to be ashamed of that which is their highest honour and most glorious privilege. p. 109.

Speak to me, O merciful Father, in whatever language thou wilt: chide, upbraid, chastise me; but O pass me not by in silent neglect: cease not to reprove me: say not, "let him alone." p. 112.

The blessing upon Levi thus proceeds; "Who said unto his father, and to his mother, I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant." This is generally understood to express the devotedness of that tribe to the worship and service of God, which laid them under a necessity of abstractedness from the world, and constrained them, when employed in the order of their course, to suppress all appearance of secular concern, such as mourning for the dead, and the like. Thus

when "Nadab and Abihu perished by fire before the Lord," Aaron and his two surviving sons were expressly forbidden to show any signs of sorrow. p. 116.

It may perhaps be intended as a warning to the Christian priesthood, that though their profession does not call them wholly to renounce the world, to restrain the workings of natural affection, and cease to be men; yet it does call them to a higher degree of heavenly-mindedness, to stricter self-government, to a greater superiority to worldly attachments and pursuits, to have no respect to persons in dispensing the bread of life, to "know no man after the flesh," to sit looser than others to the things of time. p. 117.

Pride, selfishness, and the spirit of contradiction, would instantly raise opposition, and the most salutary idea would be rejected by one party, for no better reason than that it was adopted by another.

Were the rich man to come from the

dead, commissioned "to tell the secrets of his prison-house;" were Lazarus permitted to leave the bosom of Abraham, in order to display to men the glories of paradise; what could they say that has not been repeated a thousand and a thousand times? The one would be esteemed by a busy, careless, unbelieving world, a poor, moping, melancholy wretch, fit for a place in bedlam; the other would be called an enthusiastic visionary; and they might, for aught the world cared, return to the places from whence they came, and report that mankind was better employed than to listen to their dreams; that it was election time; that the term was coming on, that a packet was expected, or a fleet arrived. p. 121.

Indeed, the best thing that can befall most men, when they die, is to be forgotten as soon as possible. Few, very few characters are such as not to suffer by handling; and there is great danger of rousing and provoking slumbering resentments against our departed friends, by an officious zeal

to trumpet their praise, and display their good qualities. The praise bestowed on the dead is generally contemptible adulation to the living; adulation, vilely bestowing the rewards of piety and goodness on mere greatness or affluence, and thereby strengthening the hands of vice, by lulling the conscience to rest, and deceiving men into the belief, that a good name may be purchased without possessing a spark of virtue. The liturgy of our established church, in how many other respects soever useful and excellent, is here faulty, and certainly does mischief. The funeral service, one of the noblest, because one of the most scriptural parts of it, with indiscriminating charity, dispenses the kingdom of heaven to the evil and the good, to "him that sweareth as to him who feareth an oath." The wretch whose whole life has been a notorious violation of every law, human and divine, who grew old in hatred and contempt of the Gospel, falls asleep in the "sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life." What is this but to en-

courage men to continue in sin, that grace may abound; to live profligates and yet hope to die in peace? p. 149.

To be a chosen instrument in the hand of heaven, to carry on the plans of Providence, to promote the wisdom and the happiness of mankind, is man's highest glory; as it is his truest felicity to do this voluntarily and from the heart, as an obedient, zealous, and cheerful fellow-worker with God. p. 150.

How delightful the progress, when duty and inclination go hand in hand!

This brings us forward to the period when the personal character of Moses, began plainly to unfold itself; and it discovers to us a mind superior to every mean, every selfish gratification. Men love to adopt the cause that prevails; and the cause of Israel was at that time low indeed. At a certain period of life passion bears unlimited sway. At forty, the calls of ambition and pride are loudest; and they who are them-

selves at ease, are little disposed to embark in the miseries of others. But in Moses behold a man, not sunk into poverty violently obtruded upon him, but poverty deliberately chosen; a man of forty relinquishing, without reluctance or regret, the pleasures, riches, and honours of a court, and exchanging them for the labour and oppression of an Israelitish slave, and glorying in the reproachful name of Hebrew, much more than in that of "the son of Pharaoh's daughter." p. 152.

And he very early experienced the ungracious, and ungrateful, and discouraging requital of services the most kindly intended; the sad presage of that life of mortification unparalleled, and most unmerited, which he was afterwards called to endure.

We behold a simple shepherd tending a flock not his own, but enjoying tranquillity and contentment; secluded from the society of men, but blessed with the visions of the Almighty; losing himself in sweet oblivion of a busy, bustling world, awake only

to the innocent joys of domestic life, and the sublimer pleasures of religion. p. 153.

—— —— Ye gentle spirits, who know what it is to soothe and relieve the lazy lingering hours of absence, by the friendly aid of letters; ye whom the murmur of a sigh, or the tone of a single word can instantly instruct; ye whose hearts the pressure of a finger can awake to rapture. —— ——

But the purest human affection is ever dashed with doubt, with apprehension, with suspicion; its communications are liable to be retarded by dullness, prevented by accident, or checked and blasted by a malignant eye, and therefore can at best convey but an imperfect idea of that "perfect love which casteth out fear," of that divine sympathy which speeds the holy intercourse from soul to soul, of that mutual understanding which needs not the medium of sense to convey it. p. 180.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE SIXTH VOLUME

OF

HUNTER'S SACRED BIOGRAPHY.

The Scriptures always exhibit the most simple and the justest view of every subject which they treat; and what subject of importance to man do they not treat?

Vol. vi. p. 17.

But social existence was not perfect till it pleased God to draw man out of solitude, by making him "an help meet for him." This simply, yet clearly unfolds woman's nature, station, duty, use and end. This raises her to her proper rank and importance, and instructs her how most effectually to support them; this forbids her to aspire after rule, for her Maker designed her

as "an helper;" this secures for her affection and respect, for how is it possible to hate or despise what God and nature have rendered essential to our happiness. If the intention of the Creator, therefore, is attended to, the respective claims and duties of the sexes are settled in a moment, and an end is put to all unprofitable discussion of superiority and inferiority, of authority and subjection, in those whose destination, and whose duty it is, to be mutually helpful, attentive, and affectionate.

But still Adam was alone amidst all this multitude; the understanding was employed, but the heart wanted its object: the tongue could name all that the eye beheld, but there was no tender, sympathetic ear, to which it could say, "how fair, how lovely, how glorious is all this that we behold!"

p. 19.

Paternal care and tenderness even outrun and prevent the calls of filial necessity.

——— In a state of degradation, difficulty and distress, as in a state of purity and peace, it was still the destination of

Providence, that woman should be "an help meet" for man.

Having been "trained up, when a child, in the way wherein he should walk," the man calls it to remembrance in old age, approves it, returns to it, and "departs from it" no more.

Read the words of "king Lemuel, the prophecy which his mother taught him," and judge, whether a mother may be an useful "help" in instructing a son, a grown son, and that son a prince. In truth the mother's influence over the child as it begins earlier, so it is of much longer duration than the father's. p. 22.

A third respect in which God intended that woman should be "an help meet" for man, is the care of his health, and every thing connected with it; his tranquillity of mind, his temper, his character and reputation. p. 26.

It is pleasant to have a companion in solitude, an assistant in labour, a fellow-par-

taker in joy. But human life contains varieties painful, as well as pleasant. Sorrow, and pain, and solicitude, and disappointment enter into the history of man: and he is but half provided for the voyage of life, who has found an associate for his happier days only; while for his months of darkness and distress, no sympathizing partner is prepared, no "help-meet" is found. The provident care of the Almighty meets every wish and want of man; and in bestowing upon him a companion for youth, a sharer in felicity, a partner in property, he was securing for him, at a distance, a friend in age, a solace in affliction, a partner in want—"a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

The spirit of penitence is inferior only to unsullied innocence; and next to the blessing of unimpaired health, and uninterrupted comfort, is the consolation of sickness alleviated, and comfort restored, by the gentle language and engaging offices of love. What shall I say? Is there not, perhaps, in the restoration of repenting guilt, and in the

suspension of woe, by the assiduity of affection, a peculiar satisfaction, and a delight, which perfect innocence and perfect health could not possibly have known? p. 27.

But there is somewhat still dearer, still more sacred to a man than children or property, than health or reputation, somewhat which, neglected, forfeited, lost, it will "profit him nothing to gain even the whole world;" and in the securing and promoting of which, who is so qualified to minister and assist as her, whom the Father of mercies gave him, to be "an help-meet for him?" I mean, the salvation of the immortal soul. This is indeed a personal concern; an interest which cannot be transferred or communicated. The good-will of another cannot impart it; the remissness of another cannot defeat it: to God, his great Master, here, every man standeth or falleth, for "every one must give account of himself to God." But is it not obvious, that example, that reason, that co-operation, possess a mighty influence toward promoting or obstructing

personal piety, growth in grace, meetness for the kingdom of heaven? p. 29.

When public instruction and foreign reproof have failed, the mind is still accessible. The unaffected, unostentatious charm of genuine female piety is felt and understood, and becomes efficacious; the silent, unupbraiding regret of conjugal tenderness supplies the place of a thousand arguments, and forces its way to the heart.

Let it be understood and remembered, that every word which has been said of the obligation laid on woman, as "an helpmeet" for man, applies with at least equal propriety and force to man, as the helper and friend of woman. Does he possess superiority of any kind? It is evidently intended not to oppress, but to support. His greater strength is given for her protection; his more vigorous or profound powers of thought, are designed to be her instructer and guide. Whatever advantage, real or apparent, each may have above the other, Providence clearly wills to be em-

ployed for the comfort and benefit of the other. A contention of mutual affection, beneficence, forbearance, forgiveness, is the only strife which nature, reason, and decency permit to this state and relation. p. 31.

The exactest proportion between male and female births is preserved; the robuster frame is still found united to the stronger mental faculties; the delicacy of the feminine form indicates, to the very eye, the softer, gentler qualities of the spirit which inhabits it; and nature assigns to each the limits of duty, and the sphere of usefulness and exertion. p. 33.

Israel had now enjoyed a blessed repose of four score years; and are again corrupted by ease and prosperity. Their national character and conduct, are a striking representation of those, of many individuals, whom we are daily meeting with in the world; who are capable of bearing neither prosperity nor adversity; whom it is impossible to serve or to save; who by their

perverseness or folly, are perpetually undoing the kindest designs, and contracting the most vigorous efforts of their friends in their behalf, and whom, at length, friends are constrained to abandon in despair.

p. 34.

Calamity is peculiarly oppressive, when it is imbittered with the reflection, that it might have been prevented; that it is the native fruit of our own doings: and with finding the wretched associates of our guilt, the wretched partakers of our woe. p. 36.

Certain it is, that the reputation which is not established on the basis of personal goodness, like a house built upon the sand, must speedily sink, and fall to pieces.

Behold a female mind exalted above the pageantry and pride of external appearance; not, deriving consequence from the splendour of her attire, the charms of her person, or the number of her retinue, but from the affability of her manners, the purity of her character, the sacredness of her office, the impartiality of her conduct the

importance of her public services; not wandering from place to place, hunting after a little empty applause, but sought unto of all Israel for the eminency, and extensive utility of her talents and her virtues. p. 37.

No good man ever wished to see the female character undervalued or degraded; and perhaps very few good women have ever violently coveted stations and employments which belong peculiarly to men.

The rivalship, however, and competition of the sexes, is altogether ridiculous and absurd. Each has its distinct, and both have their conjoined dignity and usefulness; and mutual concession is the truest wisdom in the one and in the other. p. 41.

I conclude the present, with calling on the female part of my audience to bless God, that while he has carried some of their sex, through the most arduous employments, most eminent stations, and most hazardous enterprises, not only with safety, but with

applause, he is pleased, in general, to put their talents and their virtues to a trial less severe; and let them remember, that after all which has been, or may be said, in praise of the few that have acted wisely and well upon the public theatre, to the generality, "the post of honour is a private station."

p. 43.

When we consider how frequent, how violent, and how sudden are the transitions from condition to condition in human life, pride appears to be a mystery of folly, below contempt. To behold a rational being assuming consequence on an empty, unmeaning title; or from the possession of a little wealth, that bird of passage, continually * on the wing; or from beauty and strength, which accident or disease may blast in a moment, and which the lapse of a very few years certainly will impair; to behold a man putting confidence in princes, or feeding on the applause of a multitude; to hear him saying to himself, "Soul, take

* Eternally—in the Original.

thy rest; thou hast much goods laid up for many years." "My mountain standeth strong; I shall never be moved." All this is calculated to excite derision, not resentment; and when reason and experience ponder what the end may be, anger sinks into pity. Not only is frail man every moment at the mercy of a Being, almighty to save and to destroy, but the proudest and mightiest is every moment in the power of the weakest and meanest of his fellow-creatures. The tongue of the wretch whom thou despisest, may ruin thy reputation forever. The crawling insect in thy path is armed with deadly poison against thy life. That nodding wall threatens to crush thee to pieces. Arm thee at all points, as well as thou canst, malice or hatred, envy or revenge will still find some part unguarded; and bleeding to death, thou shalt find thou art not invulnerable.

Those who are distinguished by their rank, their abilities, or their virtues, attract the notice of many observers, and create to

themselves many open and many more secret enemies. p. 45.

A wise man in the consciousness of his own rectitude, disdains to acknowledge the obligation of clearing up his conduct to every prating meddler, who may think proper to call him to account; and who has neither a right, nor a capacity to judge of his motives. p. 50.

Into what dreadful extremes we impetuously rush, when the radical principles of our nature are once subdued. Time must have been, that the idea of shedding the blood of another, would have chilled the blood in Jael's veins. What must it have cost her, to overcome the timidity, the tenderness, the compassion of her sex! But being overcome, lo! each gentle, feminine passion is lulled asleep; and frantic zeal, or demoniac revenge alone is awake. Ah! me, what beast of prey so savage and unrelenting, as a human being destitute of pity!

how easily the best things degenerate into the worst!

Of what importance is it, to guard against the first deviation from the simple and direct path! who can promise for himself, that he shall stop, return, and regain the right road when he pleases?

Believe me, my fair friends, it is not stripping you of your just importance, it is increasing and securing it, to say, the shade is your native, your proper station: it is there you shine, it is there you are useful, it is there you are respectable. p. 52.

Who will deny, that the superiority in point of discretion and understanding is frequently on the side of the female? But a woman forfeits all pretention to that very superiority the moment she assumes or boasts of it. p. 56.

The only vengeance permitted to man, is a vengeance of kindness and forgiveness; the only coals which he must scatter, are the coals of the fire of love. "If thine ene-

my hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink:"—"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you: that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. p. 58.

Those who are themselves the most deserving of praise, are ever the most liberal in bestowing it, where it is due. It is a slender and contemptible merit which seeks to shine by obscuring, concealing or diminishing the worth of another. p. 61.

Think what numbers of the bold and hardy Africans are yearly driven or trepanned into servitude, through the violence or craft of their own countrymen, or, through the more fierce and unrelenting principle of European avarice, which has reduced slave-

ry to a system, has invented an article of commerce which God and nature abhor, and concur to prohibit; and what is the subject of the infamous, impious traffic? the souls and bodies of men. p. 62.

It is hunger that gives a relish to food; it is pain that recommends ease. The value of abundance is known only to those who have suffered want, and we are little sensible what we owe to God for the blessing of health, till it is interrupted by sickness. p. 89.

Behold, O man, and remember by what a brittle tenure thy privileges and possessions are held.

All is now changed, every load is accumulated seven-fold, every comfort is embittered, every prospect is clouded: the past presents nothing but regret; the future discloses nothing but despair. p. 95.

A wise and good woman shines, by not seeking to shine; is most eloquent when she is silent, and obtains all her will, by

yielding, by submission, by patience, by self-denial. p. 100.

In the wisdom and goodness of Providence, there is a healing balm provided for every wound. The lenient hand of time soothes the troubled soul to peace; the agitation of the mind at last wearies it out, and lulls it asleep, and its weakness becomes its strength. Though in misery we cleave to the love of life, and having lost our comforts one after another, we are still enabled to look forward with fond expectation to a new source of joy. And when all temporal hope is extinguished, and reluctantly given up, the spirit asserts its own immortality, and rests in hope beyond the grave. p. 101.

How pleasurable is strife of a certain kind, the strife of good will, of magnanimity, of gratitude, of piety, of self-denial! p. 104.

God who has all hearts and all events in his hand, ever rears a refuge for the mise-

rable, provides a remedy against despair, and extracts a precious essence from calamity, which operates its own cure. p. 107.

Men fix their standard of felicity too high; and all they have attained goes for nothing, because one darling object is still out of reach; or they groan and sigh under the weight of some petty disaster, which scarce deserves the name; while ten thousand substantial blessings are daily falling on their heads unnoticed, unacknowledged, unenjoyed. Compare, O man, thy possessions with thy privations, compare thy comforts with thy deserts, compare thy condition with thy neighbours, consider how far, how very far thy state is from being the worst, and learn to give God thanks. Repine not that some wants are unsupplied, that some griefs are endured, that some designs have been frustrated, while so many unmerited good things are left, while hope remains, while there is recourse to heaven. p. 115.

In a little city, a trifling event makes a

great noise. This is the never-failing inconveniency of inconsiderable places. Where there is abundance of idleness, abundance of ill-nature, every man is a spy upon his neighbour, every one is at leisure to attend to the affairs of another, because he is but half occupied by his own. p. 117.

But wouldst thou, O man, have rational pleasure, blended with useful instruction, attend to little things. p. 119.

Riches, like every other gift of God, become a blessing or a curse just according to the use that is made of them. Riches are a solid good, when they are received with thankfulness, enjoyed with moderation, and employed in the service of God and of mankind; but are perverted into a sore evil when they engender pride, and harden the heart, as is too generally the case, when they purchase fuel for the lusts, or are fabricated into a golden image, to become the unworthy object of adoration. Had Boaz been merely a man of wealth, he had

not deserved a place in these memoirs; but though a rich man, he was not slothful in business; he was a man of humanity, of intelligence, of discretion, of affability: a man that feared the Lord, that did justly, that loved mercy. p. 126.

While health, virtue, and friendship remain, all is not lost; and Heaven frequently permits the current of human felicity to spend itself to the very lowest ebb, that its own hand may be acknowledged in the means which caused the flood to rise and swell again.

An ordinary mind in her situation would have vented itself in unavailing womanish lamentations; perhaps in unkind upbraidings.

She conceals the anguish which wrung her own heart, for fear of adding affliction to the afflicted. p. 127.

Who gives charity? Not unfeeling wealth, nor giddy dissipation; but the man who has known want, who once stood in need of a friend, who has been himself succoured

in the hour of calamity. Who is it that relents and forgives? Not cold-blooded, meritless, constitutional virtue; but restored, recovered frailty; goodness which arose the purer and the stronger for having fallen.

p. 129.

In the eye of sober, unbiassed reason, whether of the two is the more pleasing, the more respectable sight; and which is, in her own mind, the happier of the two, Ruth laden with the ears of corn which she has toiled to gather, hastening home to the hut of obscurity, to administer food and comfort to old age and sorrow; or a modern belle, issuing forth under a load of uneasy finery, to imaginary triumphs, and certain disappointment? Who sleeps soundest at night, and who awakes and arises in the best health and spirits next day? I expect not an answer. The thing speaks for itself; and I have purposely forborne to state the case so strongly as I might have done.

p. 135.

"What thinkest thou, my young friend, of the picture? Learn from it, that to doing

justly, there must be added loving mercy, and walking humbly. Learn, that the duties and felicities of human life consist in numberless, nameless, undefinable little offices, which every one may learn without a teacher, and which every one may, if he will, perform. All have it not in their power to supply the poor, to heal the sick, to succour the distressed. Opportunity does not every day offer, nor ability permit to confer material, essential benefits; but it is in the power of all to express sympathy, to breathe a kind wish. Opportunities every hour, every moment present themselves, and ability never fails of looking pleasantly, of speaking gently and affectionately. And he is a wretch indeed, who knows that the unbending of an eyebrow, the utterance of a syllable or two, the alteration of half a tone of his voice, the simple extension of his hand would in a moment relieve a heart overwhelmed with sorrow, wrung with anguish, and yet cruelly withholds so slender, so easy, so cheap a consolation. p. 139.

Young man, if thou hast to struggle* with a harsh, ungainly, unbending disposition, the sooner thou settest out in quest of victory the better. Remember that thy own comfort is involved, beyond the power of separation, with that of thy fellow creatures. Take care that the *manner* of shewing mercy, or of conferring obligation, mar not the *matter* of the benefit. The man who *refuses graciously*, impresses on the heart a more favourable idea of himself, than he who *grants* with harshness, insolence or pride. p. 140.

My son, derive thy greatness from thyself, from wisdom, from virtue. Take care to adorn thy station, thy possessions, by native goodness. Pitiable indeed is thy condition, if rank, or affluence, or even talents, serve only to render thy folly or profligacy more conspicuous. p. 143.

Happiness is here represented as built on the sure foundation of kind affections, of

* If it be thy misfortune to have to struggle.

useful industry, of reciprocal good offices, and of the fear of the Lord. Where all these unite, that house must stand, that family must prosper. In proportion as all or any of them are wanting, a partial or total ruin must ensue. p. 146.

There are persons, there are countenances, there is a deportment, which strike at first sight, and create an interest which it is impossible to account for. The great hand of nature has in many, perhaps in most instances, engraven on the external appearance, no doubtful or equivocal signs of the internal spirit or character. p. 150.

The mournful story of Naomi, and of the Moabitish damsel, her daughter-in-law, all Bethlehem Judah had heard, but not one had stepped forth to acknowledge and relieve them. Boaz himself is faulty here. Had he been informed, as he must, of the return of his near relations, and of their wretched flight, he ought to have sought them out, and unsolicited to have ministered

to their comfort. He is in this respect an instance of what is frequently to be met with in the world; of that calm, unimpassioned goodness which is abundantly disposed to succour distress, when it falls in the way, but is not sufficiently zealous, and vigorous, and active, to go abroad in quest of objects to relieve. p. 151.

True magnanimity thinks meanly of nothing but vice, esteems worth, though clothed in rags, considers the revolutions which affect every thing under the sun, despises not the wretch of to-day, knowing that he may be obliged to change places with him to-morrow. p. 152.

As Ruth rises in situation, as she rises in hope, she increases * in humility. p. 156.

This injunction could proceed only from a delicate and ingenuous mind. To have made her directly a present of the ears of

* Sinks.

corn, had been an indignity offered to her poverty; to scatter them without any apparent design, was effectually to facilitate her labour, and diminished her fatigue, without rendering the burden of obligation too grevious to be borne. The manner of conferring a benefit, it cannot be too often repeated, infinitely outweighs the matter. The comfort of human life, is a combination of little, minute attentions, which, taken separately, are nothing; but connected with the circumstances of time, place and manner, as coming from the heart, as tokens of good-will, possess a value and inspire a pleasure beyond the purchase of gold and rubies. p. 158.

Would you make a poor man happy, do not encourage him to beg. Idleness and happiness are incompatible. No, render his toil a little easier to him, teach him to draw his subsistence and comfort from, and to build his dependence upon himself.

Let me have some friendly ear, in the calmness of the evening's retreat, to listen

to my tale; some sympathetic heart, to participate in my sorrows and my joys, and I care not what hardships I endure, what mortifications I meet with, through the live-long day. Friendship doubles the delights, divides, and thereby diminishes the cares and miseries of this transitory life.

The joys of age are calm, untumultuous, untempestuous; those of youth have always a mixture of ardour and impetuosity, that allays their purity, and hastens on their dissolution. p. 159.

Sweet are the communications of filial attachment and prosperity, to the ear of maternal tenderness. p. 163.

Nothing is dishonourable, but what is sinful: poverty that is not the effect of idleness, prodigality or vice, has nothing shameful in it; the gleaner behind the reapers may be as truly dignified as the lord of the harvest. Let lordly wealth cease from pride, and virtuous obscurity and indigence from dejection and despair.

Waste not time, spirits, and thought in airy speculation about imaginary situations, but try to make the most of that in which infinite wisdom has seen meet to place thee.

He is destitute of the happiest preparation for the relish and enjoyment of prosperity, who has not arrived at it through the path of adversity. To receive with thankfulness, to enjoy with moderation, to resign with cheerfulness, to endure with patience, is the highest pitch of human virtue. p. 171.

Through much tribulation the christian must enter into the kingdom of God, and on his way be often in heaviness through manifold temptations. It is the wise ordinance of Infinite Goodness. Opposition rouses, calls forth the latent powers of the soul; success is heightened by the danger to which we were exposed, by the trouble which it cost us, by the pains we took; antecedent labour sweetens rest. Hence the passages of our own lives, which we the most fondly recollect and relate, and those

in the lives of others, which most deeply engage and interest us, are the scenes of depression, mortification, and pain through which we have passed. p. 174.

Base spirit! base world! behold kindness pressed upon a man, just in proportion as he has no need of it; behold him oppressed with new friends, because he has already got too many, carressed by those who lately knew him not, praised and flattered to his face, by the very tongues which maligned and censured him in his absence. But that man is left to continue poor because he is poor. He finds no support because he wants it, he stands unbefriended because he has no friend. Shame on the fawning sycophants that only flutter about in fair weather, that only frequent the mansions of the rich and great, that turn with the tide, that can despise ragged poverty, and offer incense to ermined villainy. p. 181.

What then is so absurd as to tax others

with absurdity, only because their language, manners, or prejudices do not exactly coincide with our own?

It is not vice only that destroys human comfort. And if mere imprudence involves a man in so many difficulties and distresses, how dreadful must it be to bear continually in one's bosom, the burning coal of an ill conscience. Happy for Elkanah and his house, family discord did not extinguish family religion; he went up regularly with all his household to worship the Lord at Shiloh, at the great yearly festivals. Had he not reason to hope that the power of religion, and the prospects of immortality might haply unite those whom passion and interest had severed. But if such were his intention, he succeeded not, and that he succeeded not, is to be imputed, in part, to his own weakness. Thus, through some mixture of folly in ourselves, through the craftiness and malignity of another, or through some untowardness of arrangement, the best designs miscarry, and medicine is converted into poison.

Who is not warned to guard against, or at least to conceal partial affections, where claims are equal? Who does not feel the importance of bringing to the altar of God, a spirit elevated above all temporal considerations! p. 189.

An evil that comes immediately from Heaven, is by that very consideration rendered both tolerable and salutary. The Lord can do nothing but what is right; "he afflicts not willingly nor grieves the children of men for his pleasure, but their profit." p. 190.

Dreadful to think, this angry, vengeful spirit continued to agitate and torment these unhappy women for many years together; and what is hell but a state of unabating, growing animosity and hatred? In female bosoms can such malignity dwell? Ah, what so bad as the good corrupted, perverted! Behold a rancour which no time could enfeeble, no sense of shame restrain. Dare we say "we love God, whom we have not

seen, while we hate" or despise "a brother," a sister, "whom we have seen."

The tongue is in every one's power, improper words admit of no defence, and rage is but a poor apology for abuse. p. 191.

Sympathy, if it does not wholly dispel our miseries, pours at least a temporary balm into the wound, and "soothes pain for awhile."

Little shades of difference, in men truly good, will unite instead of disjoining. p. 195.

There are comforts which no one but God could have bestowed: and there is wretchedness which God only can relieve. p. 198.

There are in truth very few particulars in any man's life worthy of being recorded; and of those who really have lived, a very short memoir indeed will serve all the valuable purposes of history. p. 200.

It is humility that lends energy to every other principle of the divine life.

How calm, how beautiful, how lovely, how dignified is innocence! It seeks the light, it shrinks not from the eye of inspection, it defies calumny, and wraps itself up in its own pure mantle; but disdains not, at the same time, to satisfy the honest inquiry, and to remove the hasty suspicion of true goodness; it is always ready to render a reason, always ready to prevent its good from being evil spoken of.

Let not the apparently declining state of any interest preach despair; for every evil has its remedy, except despair. That cause must perish, which all agree to give up as lost; a dying cause may revive and flourish by the wisdom and honest exertions of one man. p. 206.

"The Lord remembered her." Was he ever unmindful or unkind? No, he delayed, and he granted in love. How much it concerns thee, O man, O woman, to know and to believe this! What can reconcile thee to the hardships of thy lot, but the persuasion that the good thou desirest is denied in

wisdom, and the load that oppresses thee, laid on by the hand of a Father? Trust in the Lord, and be of good cheer; the time to favour thee will come; "The Lord will provide," "the Lord will remember thee."

p. 211.

That man is doing God service, who labours in his vocation, that he may have wherewith to do justly, and to shew mercy; not he who is slothful in business, but eager in argument, and who gives himself to speculating, when he ought to be working with his hands.

"But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, not until the child be weaned."

Who can call in question her piety? And surely her absenting herself from the feast at Shiloh, on so just an occasion, will not be deemed an impeachment of it. p. 214.

There was in all this a commanding principle of religion, of zeal for the will and glory of God, which regulated the spirit, and inspired the tongue; without which, I

am afraid there is but a slender security for domestic felicity in the exercise of even good nature and good manners, much less in a mere sense of decency, or regard to the opinion of the world. These may overawe at particular seasons, and in particular situations; but the fear and love of God are permanent and unvarying principles; they enforce and assist relative duty till it grows into a habit, and habit renders even difficult things easy and agreeable.

Let parents, by all means, amuse, delight themselves and each other with the sallies of infant, opening genius, but let them keep the delight to themselves. It is one of the joys in which "a stranger intermeddleth not." p. 217.

Ten lepers were cleansed, but "where are the nine?" Has one only returned to give thanks? Ingratitude is one of those crimes which no man is either bold or depraved enough to defend, but with which all men are justly chargeable. How few earthly benefactors but have reason to com-

plain of an ungracious return? How few parents but have that bitterness of bitterness, filial ingratitude, mingled in their cup? How verily guilty is a whole "world lying in wickedness" before God, in this respect? There is really no merit in gratitude, but what arises from its rarity; and that rarity stamps it one of the highest of moral virtues. p. 222.

Sorrow is no longer sorrow when it is poured out into the bosom of sympathy and tenderness. Every joy is multiplied an hundred fold by every communication of it to the ear and the heart of friendship. p. 232.

And in proportion as evil affections are rooted out, and kind affections are implanted, cherished and promoted, so is the image of God impressed, renewed, and preserved. The love of God perfected, shall obliterate and efface every trace of resentment against man. p. 233.

Some are born to ease and affluence, and

through indolence, inattention, or prodigality, reduce themselves to want. Some acquire wealth by frugality and industry. But however gotten, it is but an uncertain possession, and we daily see multitudes not through any apparent fault of their own, "waxing poor and falling into decay." Others as unaccountably rise into distinction and opulence. There is an unseen hand which gives and takes away. In prosperity there is no ground of insolence and triumph; in adversity no reason to despair. p. 235.

That heart must be lost to every feeling of humanity, lost to decency, lost to the fear of God, who can make the calamity of another, a ground of self-gratulation, and complacency, or a subject of thanksgiving to a holy and merciful God, as if he could become a party to our petty jealousies and contentions. p. 236.

A dry precept is but half understood, and is speedily forgotten: but a tale of distress, the triumph of goodness over malevolence

and opposition; the merited shame and punishment of wickedness, is easily understood, is long retained, and its impression is not to be effaced.

To possess with gratitude, to cherish a worthy object with tenderness, and to resign it with steadiness and magnanimity, is equally an object of admiration and esteem. p. 246.

Piety has prevailed, and presented the offering: nature feels, but submits.

We hear of no wild project formed of removing the whole family to reside at Shiloh, in order to indulge a fond mother's partial affection, with the continual presence of her little son. p. 247.

A daughter unkind, undutiful, ungrateful to a mother, is of all monsters the most odious and disgusting. Youthful excellence is never more amiable and attractive, than when it seeks retreat and retirement under the maternal wing, and, shrinking from the

public eye, seeks its reward in a mother's smile of approbation. p. 250.

Perfection consists in the happy medium between the too little and too much. It is eminently conspicuous in every thing that comes immediately from God. "He is the rock, his work is perfect, and all his ways are judgment." Contemplate the stupendous whole, or examine the minutest part, and you find no redundancy, no defect. All is good, yea, very good. But man is ever in the extreme. Now, under the power of an indolence which shrinks from every appearance of difficulty or danger, and now hurried on by a zeal which overleaps all the bounds of wisdom and discretion. Now, he cannot be prevailed on to begin, and now nothing can persuade him to stop. He makes his very good to be evil spoken of, by imprudence and excess in the manner of performing it.

In nothing is human ignorance and frailty more apparent, than in the important article of education. It is conducted, at one time,

with a severity that intimidates and overwhelms; at another, with a lenity that flatters, encourages, and fosters vice. One is driven into an evil course by despair, another drawn into it and fortified in it, by excessive indulgence. It is, in truth, no easy task to manage this matter aright. The modes of treatment are as various as the character and dispositions of the young ones, who are the subjects of it. The application of a general rule is impracticable and absurd. The discipline which would oppress one child, is hardly sufficient to restrain another within any bounds of decency. It is happy when the child is inured to habits of restraint and submission from the cradle. If the mother has discharged her duty tolerably, the business of the father and master is half executed.

p. 252.

We see in Hannah's conduct a happy mixture of tenderness and resolution; of attention to domestic employments, and regard to the offices of religion; of moderated anxiety about the safety and comfort

of her son's person, and prudent concern about the culture of his mind.

Against Eli's personal virtue no censure is insinuated. He seems to have been one of those quiet, easy, good-natured men, who love not to have their tranquillity disturbed, and are loath to disturb that of others; who, without being vicious themselves, by a passive tameness, become the undesigned abettors of the sins of other men. p. 254.

The best things are the most liable to abuse: and we shall give this faulty, unhappy father all the credit we can. His errors had their origin perhaps in goodness. His natural disposition was mild and gentle; his parental affection was great; he was unwilling to render any one unhappy; he thought of prevailing by love. He began with overlooking trifling faults; he flattered himself that the reason and reflection of riper years would correct and cure the wildness and irregularity of boyish days; "Surely, the young men will by and by see their folly, and grow wiser." Who

would not rather attempt to rule by love? But what is the proper conduct and expression of love? What saith the wisest of mankind? "He that spareth the rod, hateth the child." What saith the great Father and Saviour of all men? "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." There is no such thing as happiness but in habits of order, decency, and subjection. The man, or the child, who knows no law but that of appetite or caprice, must of necessity be miserable. p. 255.

The human mind, put under early culture, may be made to produce any thing. It possesses a happy pliancy, which may be moulded into any form. But the same plant, which, young and tender, you could with a touch bend into what shape you pleased; when grown into a tree, resists every effort of your strength. Cut it down you may, break it you may, cleave it asunder you may, but bend it you cannot. And, alas! how great a portion of human life is spent in useless, unavailing regret for opportuni-

ties lost, seasons mispent, mischief done, misery incurred! yet men will not profit even by experience, that plainest, most faithful, and most powerful of all instructers. p. 256.

For my own part, ever since I became a father, I have never been able to read this history without trembling; I have an awful conviction, that if any of my children should unhappily turn out ill, a great part of the blame would be imputable to myself; and I am much more alarmed at the apprehension, that when they are become men and women, they may accuse me of over-indulgence, than I am now, of being thought harsh and unkind by them. p. 258.

Female children in particular are an anxious and a lasting care* upon mothers. They love you, they look up to you, they imitate you. You must be therefore what you wish them to become. Will a daughter learn to be industrious from an idle,

* Burthen.

idolent mother? will she learn to be sober-minded, by seeing her mother habitually carried away by the pride of life; will she catch the spirit of piety from one whose whole time * is devoted to dissipation and pleasure? p. 259.

There is naturally a prejudice, in the first instance, in favour of youth and beauty, independent of other qualities; but that prejudice quickly dies away, where personal comeliness is unsupported by corresponding goodness. But if it be found disfigured by vice, not only is the favourable impression effaced, but exchanged for a counter impression of detestation and contempt. As, on the contrary, the prejudice against ordinary looks, is also momentary, when we find them allied to sense and talents, piety and modesty: and our esteem and veneration of the character are highly increased from our expecting less. p. 266.

* Very sabbaths are.

Poor indeed is that virtue which lives only in the estimation of the world, which aims only at the approbation and praise of men: but, on the other hand, true virtue will always be concerned to preserve reputation; will ever prefer a good name to great riches, and unaffectedly rejoice in the esteem of the wise and good, as part of its reward. This is not pride, it is the honest consciousness of a worthy mind, loving and seeking what is good, not for the sake of fame, but its own; yet rejoicing in fame as one of the fruits of goodness. That boy, that youth, that man, that woman, is lost, who is, or who professes to be, indifferent about the opinion of the world.

There is a charm in true goodness, which is irresistable. It may be overlooked for a season, it may be borne down, it may be obscured, it may be misrepresented, it may be hated and opposed; but it will prevail, at length, will force itself into notice, will arise and shine, will command respect, silence envy, triumph over opposition;

rejoice the wise and good, and keep the wicked in awe. p. 270.

Parents! the history under review presses one point upon you, as of singular moment, and closely connected with every article of education and consequent improvement; I mean the study of the happy, but difficult medium, between excessive indulgence, and oppressive severity. p. 272.

In all this we cannot but recognize the wisdom, the constancy, the fortitude of his excellent mother. Had she been foolishly fond, he had been peevish, and petulent, and timid, and discontented. Take a lesson from her, ye mothers of young children. If you would have these children happy, they must betimes be inured to subjection, to privation, to restraint.

Let women learn wherein their real value, importance, and respectability consist. Not in receiving homage, but in meriting approbation: not in shining, but in useful employment; not in public eminence, but

in domestic dignity; in acquiring and maintaining influence, not by pretension, vehemence, or trick, which are easily seen through, and always fail, but by good temper, perseverance in well-doing, and the practice of unfeigned piety. p. 275.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

OLD TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER I.

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 And God said, let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

CHAP. II.

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

2 And on the seventh day, God ended his work which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

4 These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created; in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.

6 But there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the Lord God formed man of the

dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul.

8 And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

CHAP. III.

17 And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

21 Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

CHAP. IV.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the

field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.

9 And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said I know not; Am I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, what hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

13 And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear.

14 Behold thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

15 And the Lord said unto him, therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be

taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

16 And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

CHAP. VI.

11 The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

13 And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before me for the earth is filled with violence through them, and behold I will destroy them with the earth.

14 Make thee an ark of gopher-wood: rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

15 And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of, the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, and the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above, and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof, with lower, second, and third stories, shalt thou make it.

17 And behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life from under heaven, and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant: and thou shalt come into the ark; thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

CHAP. VII.

17 And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

18 And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth: and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly

upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail: and the mountains were covered.

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:

22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

CHAP. VIII.

1 And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to

pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged.

2 The fountains also of the deep, and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.

3 And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days, the waters were abated.

4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made,

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground.

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark.

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again unto him any more.

CHAP. IX.

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

12 And God said, this is the token of the

covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud.

15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, this is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

CHAP. XI.

4 And they said, go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded.

6 And the Lord said, behold the people is one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.

7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

8 So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, and they left off to build the city.

9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel, because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from

thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

CHAP. XII.

1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him, and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

CHAP. XIII.

1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him into the south.

2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

3 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai;

4 Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first, and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.

5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together, for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle, and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perezite dwelt then in the land.

8 And Abram said unto Lot, let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

9 Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou

wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan: and Lot journeyed east, and they separated themselves, the one from the other.

12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent towards Sodom.

CHAP. XIV.

18 And Melchisedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth.

20 And blessed be the most high God, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth,

23 That I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou should say, I have made Abram rich.

24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

CHAP. XV.

6 And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

7 And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

8 And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit?

9 And he said unto him, take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove and a young pigeon.

10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another, but the birds divided he not.

11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him.

CHAP. XVI.

6 But Abram said unto Sarai, behold, thy maid is in thy hand: do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

7 And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou, and whither wilt thou go? and she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

9 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

CHAP. XVII.

1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3 And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee.

CHAP. XVIII.

1 And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day.

2 And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him; and when he saw them he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

3 And said, my lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant.

4 Let a little water, I pray you be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree;

5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts, after that you shall pass on, for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, so do as thou hast said.

6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarai and said, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.

7 And Abraham ran unto the herd and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man, and he hasted to dress it.

8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

CHAP. XIX.

15 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise take thy wife, and thy two daughters which are here, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

16 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him; and they brought him forth and set him without the city.

17 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said escape for thy life, look not behind thee,

neither stay thou in all the plain, escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed.

18 And Lot said unto them, O, not so my Lord.

19 Behold now thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life: and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die.

20 Behold now this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one; Oh! let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

21 And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

22 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither: therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

CHAP. XXI.

14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, (putting it on her shoulder,) and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

16 And she went and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot; for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept.

17 And God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called to Hagar out of Heaven and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

18 Arise lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make him a great nation.

19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

20 And God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

CHAP. XXII.

6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son, and he took the fire in his hand and a knife, and they went both of them together.

7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father. And he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering.

8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

9 And they came to the place which God

had told him of, and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order; and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

11 And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

12 And he said, lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

CHAP. XXIII.

1 And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah.

2 And Sarah, died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

3 And Abraham stood up from before

his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying;

4 I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,

6 Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead: none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

7 And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth.

8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar,

9 That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me, for a possession of a burying place among you.

10 And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth. And Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gates of his city, saying,

11 Nay, my lord, hear me, the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee, in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead.

12 And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.

13 And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, but, if thou wilt give it, I pray thee hear me; I will give thee money for the field, take it of me, and I will bury my dead there.

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him,

15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that betwixt me and thee, bury therefore thy dead.

16 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the

sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.

17 And the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure,

18 Unto Abraham for a possession, in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city.

19 And after this Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of his field of Machpelah, before Mamre, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan.

20 And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham, for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth.

CHAP. XXIV.

10 And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hands,

and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

11 And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water, at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.

12 And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

13 Behold, I stand here by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink, and she shall say, drink, and I will give thy camels drink also, let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac, and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

25 She said moreover unto him, we have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

26 And the man bowed down his head and worshipped the Lord.

27 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy, and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.

28 And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things.

29 And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban, and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

30 And it came to pass when he saw the ear-ring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man, and behold, he stood by the camels at the well.

31 And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

33 And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw

and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him.

33 And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on.

49 And now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me, and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered, and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

51 Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken.

52 And it came to pass, that when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth.

53 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment,

and gave them to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things.

54 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, send me away unto my master.

55 And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go.

56 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way: send me away, that I may go to my master.

57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth.

58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

CHAP. XXV.

7 And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.

8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and

died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre;

10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth; there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

11 And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac: and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi.

CHAP. XXVI.

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred fold: and the Lord blessed him.

13 And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew, until he became very great;

14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.

15 For all the wells which his father's

servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us: for thou art much mightier than we.

17 And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esex; because they strove with him.

21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

22 And he removed from thence, and

digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

23 And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.

CHAP. XXVII.

32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? and he said, I am thy son, thy first born, Esau.

33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

35 And he said, thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing.

36 And he said, Is not he rightly named

Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birth-right, and behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him; and what shall I do now unto thee, my son.

38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

39 And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above.

40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother: and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt brake his yoke from off thy neck.

41 And Esau hated Jacob, because of the

blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob.

42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.

43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother, to Haran;

44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him; then I will send, and fetch thee from thence. Why should I be deprived also of you both in one day.

46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me.

CHAP. XXVIII.

10 And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God.

CHAP. XXIX.

1 Then Jacob went on his journey, and came unto the land of the people of the east.

2 And he looked, and behold, a well in the field, and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was upon the well's mouth.

3 And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep and put

the stone again upon the wells mouth in his place.

4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? and they said of Haran are we.

5 And he said unto them, Know ye, Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, we know him.

6 And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and and told her father.

13 And it came to pass when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house, and he told Laban all those things.

14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh; and he abode with him, the space of a month.

15 And Laban said unto Jacob, Because

thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be?

CHAP. XXX.

27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, If I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.

28 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.

29 And he said, unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me.

30 For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also.

31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said thou shalt not give me any thing; if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock.

CHAP. XXXI.

1 And he heard the words of Laban's sons saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our fathers; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.

2 And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and behold, it was not towards him as before.

3 And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.

4 And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock.

5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before: but the God of my father hath been with me.

6 And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.

7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times: but God suffered him not to hurt me.

13 I am the God of Bethel, where thou annointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

16 For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's: now then whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

17 Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels.

20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

21 So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead.

22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled.

23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey: and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not unto Jacob either good or bad.

25 Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

26 And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives, taken with the sword?

36 And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? What is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?

37 Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren.

and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

39 That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bear the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.

40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

CHAP. XXXII.

1 And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

2 And when Jacob saw them, he said This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother, unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now.

6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks and herds, and camels into two bands,

8 And said, if Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left, shall escape.

9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee;

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant: for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.

11 Deliver me, I pray thee from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.

16 And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose art these before thee?

18 Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's: it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us.

19 And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.

21 So went the present over before him; and himself lodged that night in the company.

CHAP. XXXIII.

1 And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

2 And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

3 And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, and they wept.

8 And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

9 And Esau said, I have enough, my brother, keep that thou hast unto thyself.

10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

11 Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough: and he urged him, and he took it.

12 And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me, and the children be able to endure: until I come unto my lord unto Seir.

15 And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me: and he said, What needeth it? Let me find grace in the sight of my lord.

16 So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and

built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Soccoth.

18 And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram and pitched his tent before the city.

19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money.

CHAP. XXXV.

1 And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fledest from the face of Esau thy brother.

2 Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments.

3 And let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God,

who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.

4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their ear-rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.

5 And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

6 So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, (that is Bethel,) he and all the people that were with him.

7 And he built there an altar, and called the place El-Beth-el; because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.

27 And Jacob came unto Isaac his father, unto Mamre, unto the city of Arba, (which is Hebron,) where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

28 And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years.

29 And Isaac gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

CHAP. XXXVI.

6 And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob.

7 For their riches were more than that they might dwell together: and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them, because of their cattle.

8 Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir. Esau is Edom.

CHAP. XXXVII.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours.

4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed.

7 For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

8 And his brethren said unto him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? and they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words.

9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren and said, Behold I have dreamed a dream more: and behold the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

10 And he told it to his father, and to his

brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

12 And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.

13 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send thee unto them, and he said unto him, here am I.

14 And he said to him, Go I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

15 And a certain man found him, and behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou?

16 And he said, I seek my brethren; tell me, I pray Thee, where they feed their flocks.

17 And the man said, they are departed hence: for I heard them say, Let us go to

Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit; and we will say, some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21 And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit, that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

23 And it came to pass when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him.

24 And they took him, and cast him into

a pit; and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes, and looked, and behold a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels, bearing spicery and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

27 Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hands be upon him: for he is our brother, and our flesh: and his brethren were content.

28 Then there passed by Midianites, merchant-men: and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

29 And Reuben returned unto the pit; and behold Joseph was not in the pit: and he rent his clothes.

30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not: and I, whither shall I go?

31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood.

32 And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father, and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.

33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning; thus his father wept for him.

36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

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